FANTASY & SCI-FI DIGITAL ART

ImagineFX

PHOTOSHOP

11 LINE ART TRICKS

Legends

MOEBIUS & MCQUARRIE

OUR TRIBUTE TO TWO ART VISIONARIES

ADAM HUGHES

The pin-up master on painting the Fairest of them all

THE ULTIMATE COMIC ART ISSUE

DC and Marvel's art heroes team up to supercharge your skills!

WONDER WOMAN! THE ICONIC ART JOURNEY OF COMICS' FIRST LADY

SMITHMICRO
SOFTWARE



MANGA STUDIO™

THE STANDARD IN MANGA & COMIC ILLUSTRATION

Manga Studio is your all-in-one solution for stunning, ready-to-publish Manga and Comics. Bring your artwork to life using color, express motion using speed lines, apply dimension with screen tones and add dialog through built-in word balloons.

To learn more visit: manga.smithmicro.com



Welcome...
to ImagineFX



Sadness came rapping at our door twice while we were putting this issue together. We learned that Ralph McQuarrie and Jean 'Moebius' Giraud had departed our world. It's no exaggeration to say both artists will have shaped the imaginations, dreams and career hopes of almost all of you reading this.

Concept art's founding father Ralph McQuarrie passed away at the age of 82. It's impossible to imagine how the fantastical world would have looked without Ralph's input. His design blueprints for cities, ships and creatures on the Star Wars films not only trail blazed the role of a concept artist in Hollywood, but also defined how we envisage the way the future may look. Moebius has arguably more of an influence within the artistic community. His work was so broad and far reaching, and his influence reigned over comics and sci-fi films, such as Alien, Dune and TRON.

So, on page 44 for Moebius and page 64 for Ralph McQuarrie, we – and some of the world's best artists – pay our respects to these leading lights of fantasy and sci-fi art. Many of these artists cite McQuarrie and Moebius as the reasons for doing what they do.

It's customary in many cultures to down tools as a mark of respect for those who've passed away. But in this instance, I think a more fitting tribute will be for us to pick up our artistic tool of choice and carry on creating. It's the ultimate tribute to two visionaries who are responsible for most of us picking up a pencil in the first place.

Claire

Claire Howlett, Editor
claire@imaginefx.com

Our special cover for subscribers this issue.



Contact us
Email: mail@imaginefx.com **Tel:** +44 (0) 1225 442244
Art submissions: fxpose@imaginefx.com
Web: www.imaginefx.com
@imaginefx www.facebook.com/imaginefx

Subscription queries

UK, Europe and rest of world	US and Canada
Web: www.myfavouritemagazines.co.uk	**Phone (toll-free):** 1-800 428 3003
Email: contact@myfavouritemagazines.co.uk	**Web:** www.imsnews.com/imaginefx

Subscribe! See pages 33 (digital edition) and 34.



Storemags.com

FANTASY & SCI-FI DIGITAL ART
ImagineFX

EDITORIAL
CLAIRE HOWLETT EDITOR
claire@imaginefx.com
IAN DEAN DEPUTY EDITOR
ian.dean@futurenet.com
DANIEL VINCENT ART EDITOR
daniel.vincent@futurenet.com
CLIFF HOPE OPERATIONS EDITOR
clifford.hope@futurenet.com
BEREN NEALE STAFF WRITER
beren.neale@futurenet.com
SHONA CUTT DESIGNER
shona.cutt@futurenet.com

CONTACT US
POST ImagineFX Magazine, Future Publishing Ltd, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, BA1 2BW, UK
PHONE +44 (0) 1225 442244
WEB www.imaginefx.com
EMAIL mail@imaginefx.com
TWITTER @imaginefx
FACEBOOK www.facebook.com/imaginefx
DVD PROBLEMS +44 (0) 1225 822743
EMAIL support@futurenet.com

SUBSCRIPTIONS **UK, EUROPE & REST OF THE WORLD**
UK PHONE 0844 848 2852
OUTSIDE OF UK +44 (0) 1604 251045
EMAIL contact@myfavouritemagazines.co.uk
WEB www.myfavouritemagazines.co.uk

SUBSCRIPTIONS **US AND CANADA**
PHONE (toll-free): 1-800 428 3003
WEB www.imsnews.com/imaginefx

CONTRIBUTIONS
Matt Boyce, Lauren K Cannon, Mélanie Delon, Matt Dixon, Craig Elliott, Ai'y Fell, Michael Gapper, Alex Garner, Damian Hall, Richard Hill, Jon Hodgson, Richard Hood, Alvin Lee, Jorge Carlos Molina Manzanero, Terese Nielsen, Paul Phippen, Cynthia Sheppard, Gary Stuckey, Alex Thomas, Lois van Baarle, Eric Vedder, Calum Alexander Watt, Garrick Webster, Henry Winchester
PHOTOGRAPHY Future Photography Studio
PAUL NEWMAN group senior editor
STEVE GOTOBED group senior art editor
ROBIN ABBOTT creative director
JIM DOUGLAS editorial director

ADVERTISING +44 (0) 207 0424124
NICK WEATHERALL advertising sales director
nick.weatherall@futurenet.com
RICARDO SIDOLI account sales manager
ricardo.sidoli@futurenet.com
MALCOLM STOODLEY London sales director
malcolm.stoodley@futurenet.com
ROSS ARTHURS senior sales executive
ross.arthurs@futurenet.com
LAURA WATSON senior sales executive
laura.watson@futurenet.com

MARKETING
LYNDSEY MAYHEW marketing manager
SARAH JACKSON marketing executive

CIRCULATION
JOHN LAWTON trade marketing manager
RICHARD JEFFERIES international account manager

PRINT & PRODUCTION
VIV TURNER production co-ordinator
MARK CONSTANCE production manager
NOLA COKELY ad production manager
NATHAN DREWETT ad production co-ordinator
MICHELLE ROGERS operational purchasing manager

LICENSING
REGINA ERAK senior licensing & syndication manager

FUTURE PUBLISHING LIMITED
STUART ANDERTON group publishing director
MATTHEW PIERCE group publisher
FIONA TULLY publisher
MARK WOOD chief executive

NEXT ISSUE ON SALE **27 APRIL 2012**
Printed in the UK by Midway (cover)
William Gibbons (inside)
Distributed by Seymour Distribution Ltd
+44 (0) 207 429 4000
2 East Poultry Avenue, London EC1 9PT

ImagineFX is the registered trademark of Future Publishing Ltd. All Rights Reserved.

Want to work for Future?
Visit www.futurenet.com/jobs

abc Total Average Net Circulation 16,245 Jan-Dec 2011

Future produces carefully targeted magazines, websites and events for people with a passion. Our portfolio includes more than 180 magazines, websites and events and we export or license our publications to 90 countries around the world.

Future plc is a public company quoted on the London Stock Exchange (symbol: FUTR)

www.futureplc.com

Chief Executive Mark Wood
Non-executive Chairman Peter Allen
Group Finance Director Graham Harding
Tel +44 (0)207 042 4000 (London)
Tel +44 (0)1225 442 244 (Bath)

© Future Publishing Limited 2012. All rights reserved. No part of this magazine may be used or reproduced without the written permission of the publisher. Future Publishing Limited (company number 2008885) is registered in England and Wales. The registered office of Future Publishing Limited is at Beauford Court, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2BW. All information contained in this magazine is for information only and is, as far as we are aware, correct at the time of going to press. Future cannot accept any responsibility for errors or inaccuracies in such information. Readers are advised to contact manufacturers and retailers directly with regard to the price of products/services referred to in this magazine. If you submit unsolicited material to us, you automatically grant Future a licence to publish your submission in whole or in part in all editions of the magazine, including licensed editions worldwide and in any physical or digital format throughout the world. Any material you submit is sent at your risk and, although every care is taken, neither Future nor its employees, agents or subcontractors shall be liable for loss or damage.

recycle
When you have finished with this magazine please recycle it.

Featured artists

ImagineFX brings together some of the world's finest artists to share their techniques and inspiration for creating stunning artwork



Cliff Chiang



Cliff has a joint degree in English Literature and Visual Arts from Harvard University and has used his education to carve out a career in comics, illustrating Swamp Thing, Red Sonja, Batman and many more. Having relaunched Wonder Woman for DC's New 52 event, who better to discuss the evolution of this famous character? Read his thoughts on page 52.

www.cliffchiang.com



Alvin Lee



Having started professionally in comics aged 17 Alvin has drawn for all of the major companies, including DC, Marvel and WildStorm. His work at Udon, on the Street Fighter comic, helped resurrect the classic video game franchise and drive a successful comic spin-off. This issue he shows how to compose a dynamic group pose of Street Fighter characters, on page 78.

www.alvinleeart.com



Calum A Watt



With four years under his belt creating eye-catching illustrations for 2000 AD, Calum moved into video game concept art, working on the critically acclaimed futuristic racing game Split Second. He's currently freelancing, but in his spare time creates sparse mech art using SketchBook Pro. On page 84 Calum reveals the tricks behind his unique process.

www.bit.ly/calumwatt



Jorge Molina



Former video game concept artist with Tomb Raider-developer Crystal Dynamics, Jorge is currently working for Marvel creating covers and interiors for X-Men and New Mutants. This issue, on page 88, you can discover how Jorge creates his colourful, action-packed art as he takes us through his process of creating the cover for his latest comic, New Mutants issue 25.

www.zurdom.com



Craig Elliott



This ex-Disney artist worked on some of the best new Mouse House films, including Princess and the Frog, Hercules and Enchanted. Now a freelance concept artist, Craig fits in work for Blizzard, Darkhorse and more between films. Turn to page 94 to read how he paints a card game character for World of Warcraft, from black and white sketch to final colour painting.

www.bit.ly/craigelliott



Lois van Baarle



After teaching herself to draw digitally while still in high school, Lois knew she wanted to be an artist. She has always had an interest in animation, and studied in Ghent, Belgium, before moving back to the Netherlands to continue her studies at Hogeschool voor de Kunsten Utrecht in Hilversum. On page 98 this issue she reveals her tips for drawing and enhancing your digital line art.

www.loish.net



FANTASY & SCI-FI DIGITAL ART ImagineFX

Cover artist

A comic career spent painting and drawing some of the industry's most iconic female characters, Alex Garner turns his hand to DC's first lady…



Alex Garner

COUNTRY: US
SOFTWARE: Photoshop
WEB: www.alexgarner.com

In the 1990s Alex worked on fan-favourites Gen 13 and Danger Girl, before co-founding IDW in 1999. He now works for Marvel and DC, including painting Wonder Woman's most recent covers. Indeed, Alex painted this issue's warm and elegant cover – see how he did it in the illuminating workshop on page 72.



™ & © 2012 Marvel



Wonder Woman is ™ and © DC Comics.

In progress

Putting some sparkle into our latest cover



After Alex submitted two sketches: we chose this composition based on the strong pose and eye contact. Although Wonder Woman has recently been redesigned, we're fans of her original costume, and go for this design. See the character's full history on page 52.



As he works up the chosen sketch Alex decides the character's head is too rigid and passive. He tweaks his design as he paints to give across more of that elusive demi-god feel that Wonder Woman's known for. The colours are coming along, but also need some refinement...



The warm palette feels a little too subtle to grab attention on the newsstand. With direction, Alex dips back into his painting and boosts the colours. His unique process, seen in his workshop on page 72, makes this task easy.

Storemags.com



It's your last chance to receive a free copy of ArtRage3 Studio Pro when you start a print subscription to ImagineFX! See page 34



ImagineFX Fantasy & Sci-fi digital art

Contents

FXPosé
8 Reader FXPosé

ImagineNation
20 News
30 Forum winners
32 Letters
36 Artist Q&A

Features
44 **A tribute to Jean 'Moebius' Giraud**
Some of comic and fantasy art's most iconic imagery came from one man's imagination. We celebrate the life of Moebius.

50 **Development sheet**
Eric Lutes designed a balanced buggy that's armoured, agile and can mix it up in a fight.

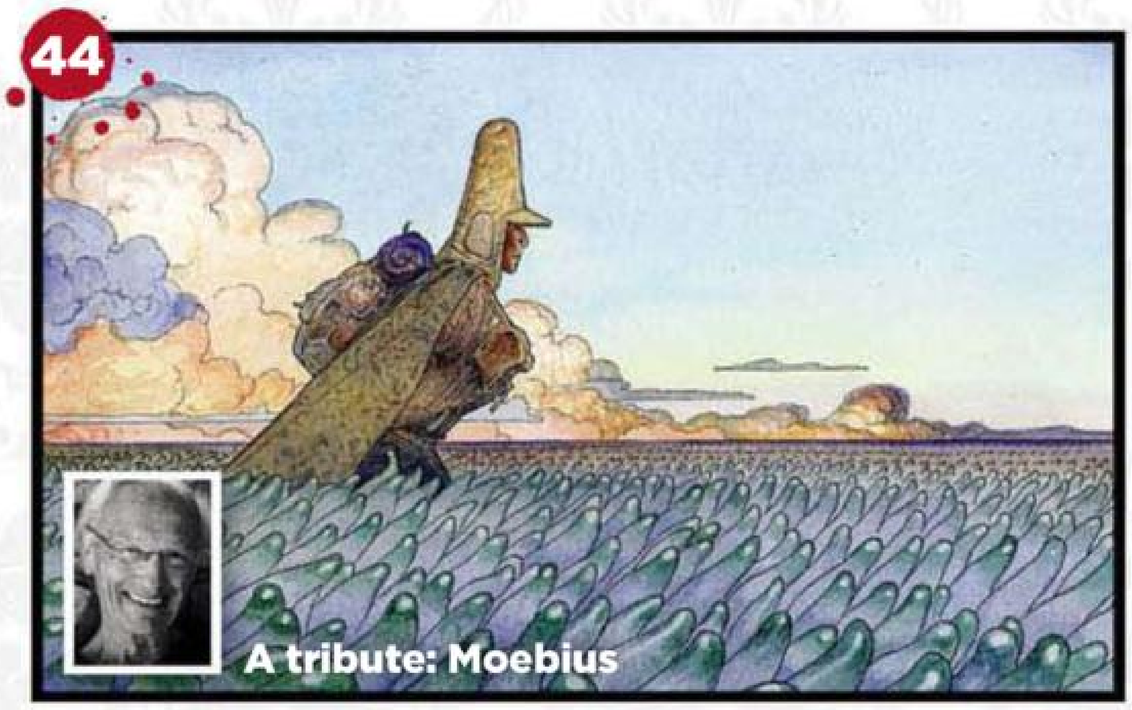
52 **Wonder Woman**
Eighty years on and this Amazonian princess is still going strong! We chart the life and times of Wonder Woman.

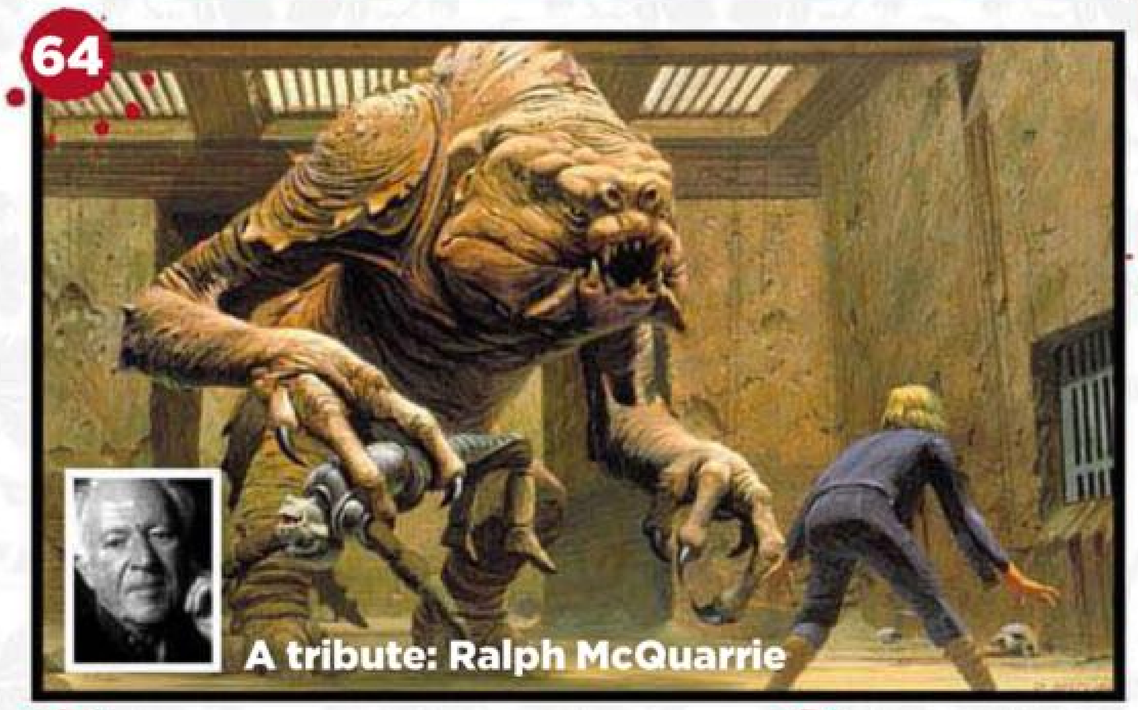
60 **Sketchbook**
DreamWorks animation artist Alexandre Puvilland reveals the landscapes he loves.

64 **A tribute to Ralph McQuarrie**
We salute the man who helped bring the Star Wars universe to life, inspiring generations of budding artists in the process.

Reviews
106 Hardware
108 Books
109 Training
110 Film
111 Video games

Regulars
3 Editor's letter
33 Digital editions
34 Subscribe today
92 Back issues
93 Next month
112 Studio profile

















Reader FXPosé
THE PLACE TO SHARE YOUR DIGITAL ART



See page 8 for the best new art



Storemags.com

ImagineFX Fantasy & Sci-Fi Digital Art

Workshops

Advice and techniques from pro artists…



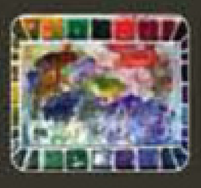
72 Produce iconic superhero art
Alex Garner shows how he created our cover.



76 Create a space wreck at sunrise
Paul Phippen paints a huge, beached space hulk.



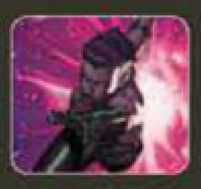
78 Create a dynamic comic group pose
Alvin Lee pencils a dynamic comic collage.



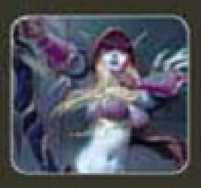
83 First steps with watercolours
Watercolours provide freshness and luminosity.



84 Make the most of dramatic lighting
Calum Alexander Watt adds atmosphere.



88 Draw and paint X-Men cover art
Jorge Molina Manzanero reinvents a character.



94 Compose a game card character
Craig Elliott reimagines Lady Sylvanas for Blizzard.



98 Enhance your digital line art
Lois van Baarle shares her favourite line work tips.

Artist Q&A

36 This month's Q&A topics...
How to paint a moon, bubbles, people made of glass, exotic armour, shiny rubber, paint splatters and more.





Reader FXPosé

THE PLACE TO SHARE YOUR DIGITAL ART

ImagineFX Artist of the Month

Jennifer Healy
LOCATION: US
WEB: www.bit.ly/jenniferhealy
EMAIL: myjennlee@hotmail.com
SOFTWARE: Photoshop



Jennifer is a 26-year-old, self-taught digital painter who lives in Louisiana, US. "I've been indulging in my passion for art since 2009," she says, "and before my love for digital art, I was a pencil artist who dabbled in watercolour."

Her art is inspired by her love of music, games, girly things and the strange. "I love mixing beauty with the beast," Jennifer says. "I feel my strongest skill at this point is my use of colour. I use colour to emphasise the beauty and the frightening aspects."

As well as having a soft spot for fantasy and surrealism, Jennifer likes to use a "stream of thought" process when tackling her personal pieces.



1 VICTORIAN VOODOO "This is voodoo with a Victorian flare. I like to mix ugly and pretty in most of my pieces – her soft, pale skin in contrast with her creepy eyes and hair set. I wanted to produce a bit of an intimidating feel to the image."

2 BEAUTY IN THE BEAST "This scary yet beautiful world of ours... I was aiming to mix the good and bad in this piece, with a soft and harsh appeal. The pretty rose verses the scariness of the alligator teeth and scales. I also wanted to practice a different mood with the muted colours I used."



ARTIST OF THE MONTH

Congratulations Jennifer – you've won yourself a copy of Exotique 6 and Character Modeling 3! To find out more about these two great art resources, go to www.ballisticpublishing.com.

Stevenson Gallery .com

FXPosé submissions to: fxpose@imaginefx.com

Artist crit

Mélanie Delon is seduced by Jennifer's Beauty in the Beast…



"The pale, tender pink contrasting with the dark blue of the background is just lovely. The character design is stunning, while the amount of detailing is absolutely impressive, especially the teeth on the petals. Great work!"

Reader FXPosé

THE PLACE TO SHARE YOUR DIGITAL ART

stockvfxgs.com

Craig Hodges

LOCATION: Wales
WEB: www.cubica.deviantart.com
EMAIL: chodges81@hotmail.com
SOFTWARE: Photoshop, Illustrator



Craig may have received his Bachelor of Arts degree in computer animation, but it's digital art and illustration that really captivates the artist.

"ImagineFX, along with the massive, expanding online digital art community, continue to be a huge source of motivation for me," he says. "And with an almost-unhealthy obsession for film and comics, I plan to continually suckle on the rich milk of creative inspiration while striving to develop my skills as an artist."

Craig is currently working on freelance illustration projects and pursuing a concept art role in the games industry.

1



2



3



1 GIDEON CHROME "I love the Flash Gordon/Golden Age of comics and so wanted to produce a hero character who embodied that handsome and macho stereotype."

2 PIN-UP "I wanted to paint a femme fatale/50s-style pin-up girl, so this piece was a bit of a no-brainer. I'm not quite sure what her backstory is – though I don't think she even needs one!"

3 GORGON CONCEPT "This is my take on one of Medusa's sisters. Rather than reptilian, I thought a scorpion figure might feel equally as creepy and sinister."

FXPosé submissions to: fxpose@imaginefx.com

Ferdinand D Ladera
LOCATION: Philippines
WEB: www.digitalhadz.blogspot.com
EMAIL: digitalhadz@gmail.com
SOFTWARE: Photoshop



Ferdinand was born in Iligan, the city of waterfalls, in the south-east Philippines. "I have a signature style of 'dreams brought to life' in my digital painting," explains the artist. "I've been developing this since getting a Bachelor's degree in fine arts at FEATI University in Manila."

With a background as a fine artist, graphic designer and photographer, Ferdinand now works as a concept and 3D artist at Ladyluck Digital Media, a game outsourcing company that's based in the Philippines.

1



2



3



IMAGINEFX CRIT



"The use of oversized feather headdresses is the perfect device to frame Ferdinand's characters and give them extra impact. Somehow his warrior looks more imposing than any bulked-up space marine or Chaos knight."
Cliff Hope, Operations Editor

1 URDUJA "Princess Urduja is a figure from Philippine legend, a warrior princess who's said to have ruled the kingdom of Tawalisi in the province of Pangasinan."

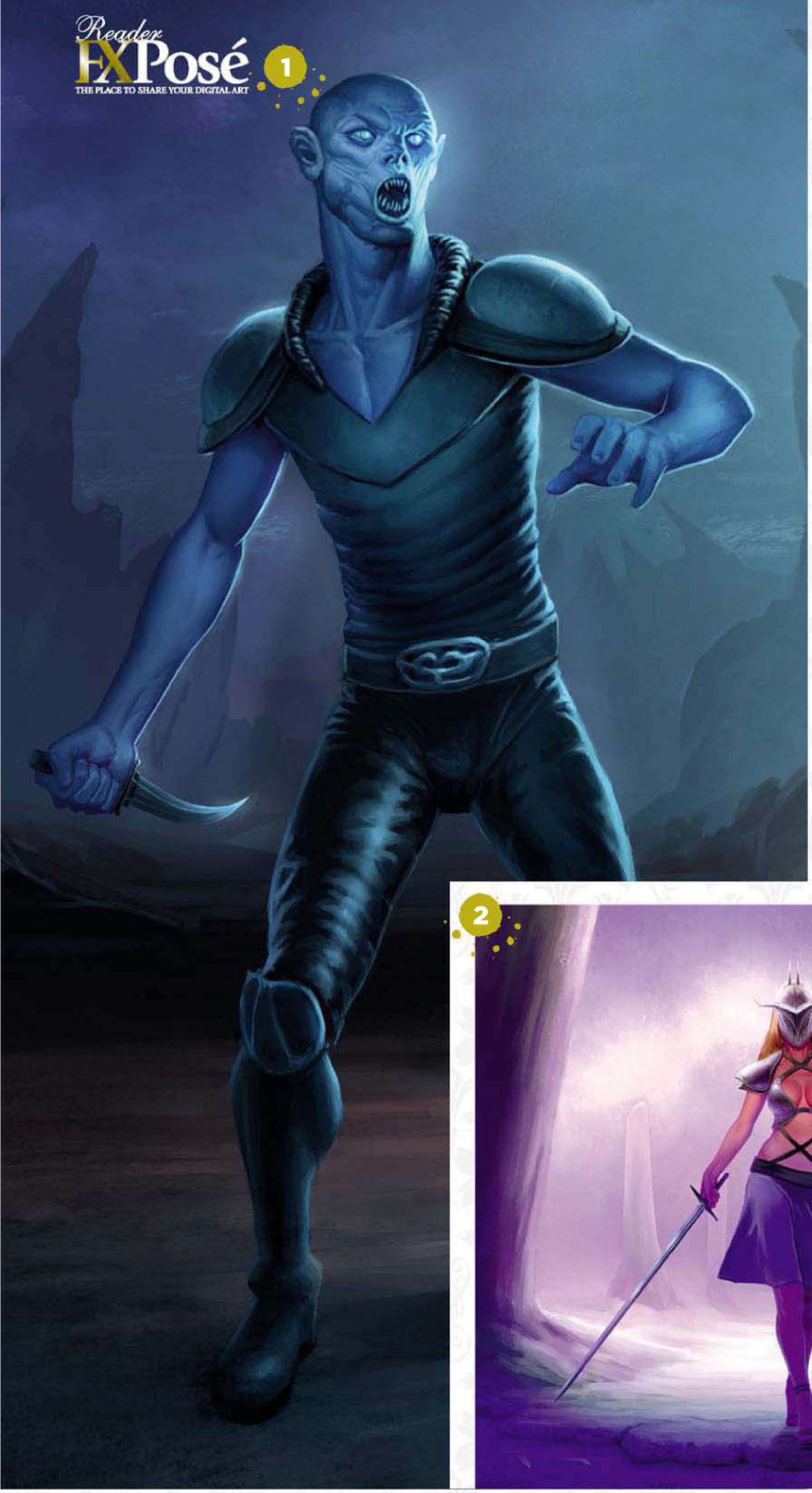
2 THE TOWERS OF KEILAH "Keilah is a place where there are so many strange creatures; quiet and abundant. You would be mesmerised by the beauty of Keilah; the enchanted towers have a supernatural power to control natural forces and the power of irresistible attraction."

3 IBALOY WARRIOR "My illustration of a young warrior from the Ibaloy tribe in the province of Benguet, Philippines. The story of a warrior who has stood amidst violence to fight for his tribe – to be their protector, to be their survivor and their hero against evil-doers and subjugators."

FXPosé submissions to: fxpose@imaginefx.com

Reader FXPosé 1

THE PLACE TO SHARE YOUR DIGITAL ART



Derek Murphy

LOCATION: Canada
WEB: www.bit.ly/jdmurphy
EMAIL: johnderekmurphy@gmail.com
SOFTWARE: Photoshop



"I live in New Brunswick, Canada, where not much happens other than potato farming and beer brewing," says 26-year-old artist Derek. "Thankfully, I'm quite fond of both," he says.

Derek's also a fan of drawing and painting, and originally harboured plans to become an animator, even going to school for three years to study in the field. "In the end I learned I didn't really like to animate. But I did like drawing and creating things for animations."

And so Derek's niche in the creative process was discovered. He's been teaching himself how to paint, using Photoshop for the past two years, and is "hoping to make something of myself within the next five years. Otherwise, I should have just been an animator."

1 VAMPIRE DAGGERS "What can I say about this piece? Basically it was a lighting study. I had also wanted to paint a vampire!"

2 LADYTUDE "This was meant to be a colour study. Before, I used to start with basic monochromatic colours in my work, and because of these studies, I'm slowly starting to figure things out – along with some help from a few James Gurney books."

2

FXPosé submissions to: fxpose@imaginefx.com

1

Lik Wong
LOCATION: Hong Kong
WEB: www.bit.ly/lwong
EMAIL: k_force@yahoo.com.hk
SOFTWARE: Maya, Photoshop



Lik works a computer graphics studio supervisor in Hong Kong. "I've been doing this for nearly 10 years," he says, "and I've always relished the unique mix of art, technology, clients, budgets and schedules that my work involves."

For Lik, a high-quality piece of work is always his ultimate goal, but making money is a close second in his business, and that can get a little frustrating for him. "Although I usually work in 3D, recently I made time to produce a drawing that expressed my frustration with this aspect of my career."

IMAGINEFX CRIT



"Lik has an interesting and refreshing take on a theme that affects most of us. The strong lighting creates a real sense of a force blowing about the couple and I love how the light dapples through the swirling dollar notes.".
Shona Cutt, Designer

1 LIFE IS MONEY?! "I've been working long hours for as long as I can remember, which after a while makes you question what's important in life. Is the meaning of life to earn money? I became a little frustrated with my situation and made this drawing to put things into perspective."

Storemags com



FXPosé submissions to: fxpose@imaginefx.com

Ibrahem Swaid

LOCATION: United Arab Eremites
WEB: www.holypixels.com
EMAIL: ibrahem.swaid@gmail.com
SOFTWARE: Photoshop



Born in 1985 in Damascus, Syria, Ibrahem is a digital illustrator and concept designer for games.

"I started my gaming career – if I can call it that – back in 2008, working as a freelancer who created, designed and illustrated TV-based games," he says.

His passion for games grew and two years later Ibrahem formed an independent game development company with two friends. "We started by doing a small demo for a horror adventure platform game, as a way to test our capability to work as a team," he says. "We called it Project Flame."

Aside from doing concepts for video games, Ibrahem focuses on sci-fi and post-apocalyptic subject matters in his personal work, mostly enjoying art based on the Warhammer 40K universe.

1 THE VIII PRIMARCH "This is Konrad Curze, The Night Haunter, son of the Emperor of Mankind. I'm pretty pleased how I've kept it dark, yet managed to include detail and strong colours as well."

2 LORD IRCEL "This piece was created as part of the Dominance War 4 challenge; to depict a demon lord concept. My idea was to create a demon lord who uses ice/cold as his power, but at the same time I didn't want to make an evil ice-cube!"

3 THE XI PRIMARCH "I started working on the Primarch Project, which is re-visualising each of the 20 Primarchs from Warhammer 40K. So this is my attempt to create a concept for one of the Unknown Primarchs from this rich gaming universe."





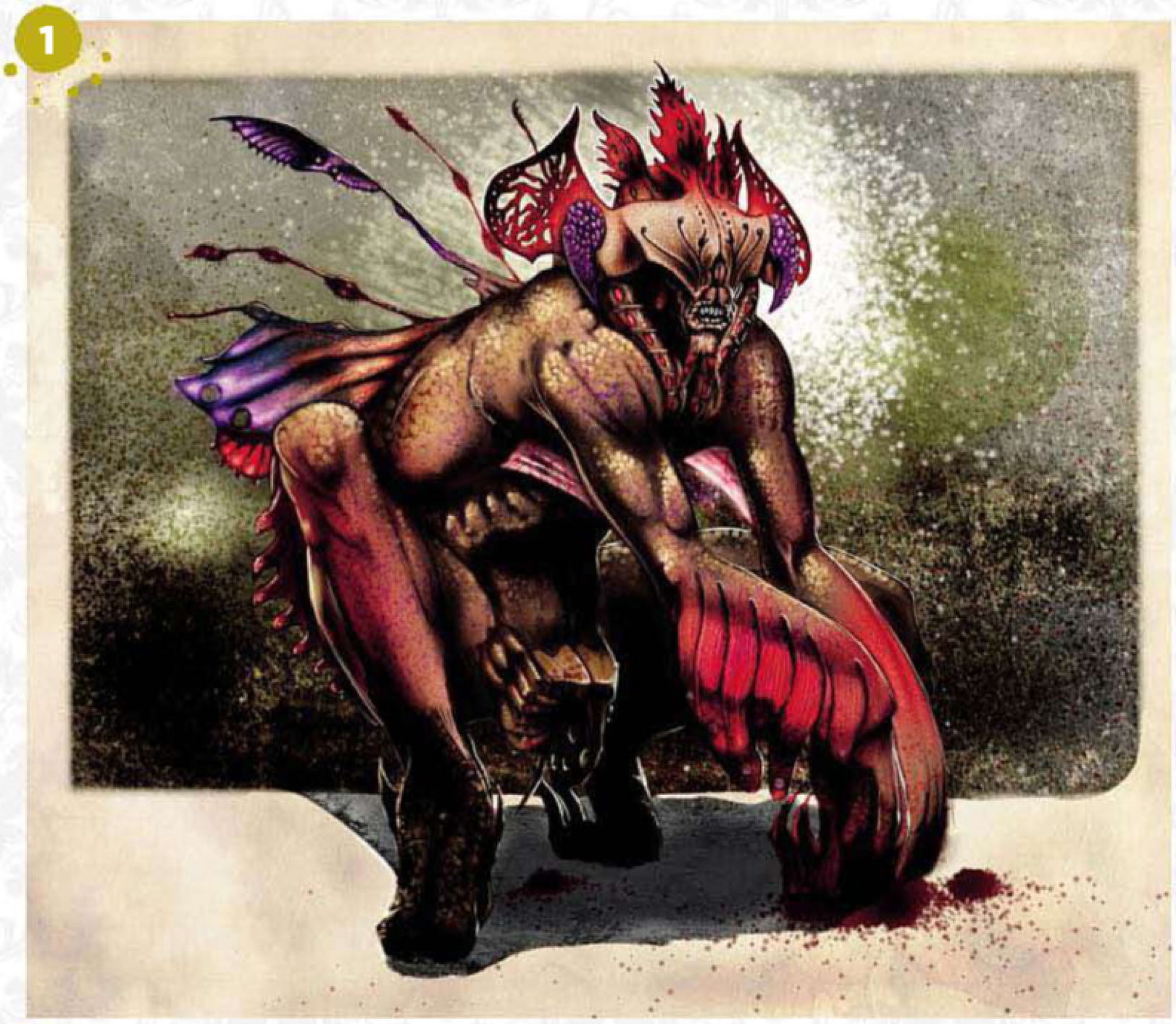
FXPosé submissions to: fxpose@imaginefx.com

IMAGINEFX CRIT

"One thing's for sure, Ibrahem isn't afraid to ramp up his colour palette. Maybe it's his video game art background coming to the fore here, as there's a skill to creating vibrancy out of dark images and he definitely has that skill."
Claire Howlett, Editor

Store.imagine-publishing.com

1



Mate Jako

LOCATION: England
WEB: www.entenn.deviantart.com
EMAIL: entenn.studio@gmail.com
SOFTWARE: Photoshop, Painter, ArtRage



Harking from a small town in Hungary, Mate has been a jobbing theatre actor since the age of nine. "Later I got into telly and was fortunate enough to work on some Hungarian movies as well," he says.

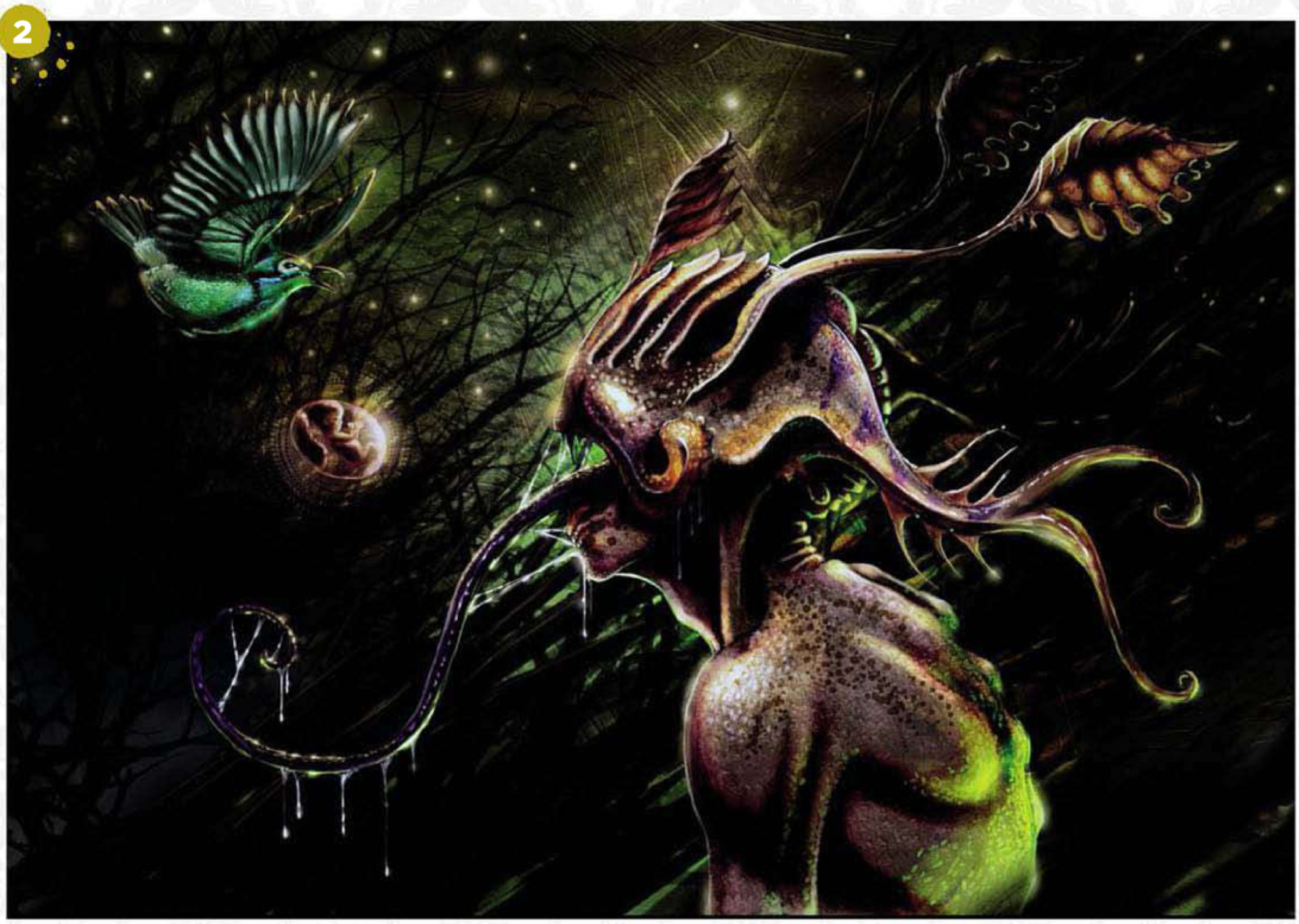
Throughout his intriguing formative years Mate was always drawing, "but never really seriously and it wasn't until I turned 16 that it was ever anything more than just having fun."

Inspired by Hollywood visual effects artist Stan Winston, Mate gave up acting and has since dedicated himself to creating art.

1 BULL "The task was to create a menacing yet aesthetic creature that's disgusting enough to you not to bear its touch, but at the same time you can't take your eyes off it."

2 THE TREES "The goblins were men a long time ago who raped, killed or abused women and often their children, too. And therefore they were cursed: their bodies have transformed and their souls are gone. They feast on infants yet to be born."

2



FXPosé submissions to: fxpose@imaginefx.com

Reader FXPosé

THE PLACE TO SHARE YOUR DIGITAL ART



1

Michele Frigo

LOCATION: Italy
WEB: www.michelefrigo.com
EMAIL: info@michelefrigo.com
SOFTWARE: Photoshop



Michele recalls a pivotal moment as a child. "I promised myself that when I grew up I'd be an artist. I was serious about that promise too, and it motivated me over the years," he tells us. "And luckily it became true."

Michele has been a freelancer for years as a graphic designer and illustrator of book covers. "I've always been fascinated by fantasy and pagan cultures where even the most trivial item can become magical."

IMAGINEFX CRIT



"Great use of dynamic lighting here to draw out the characters' traits, from the subtle crinkles of leathery skin on Michele's grumpy dwarf to the harsh glow that ensures his Jedi jumps from the page."
Ian Dean,
Deputy Editor

1 THE BLACKSMITH "I remember playing an RPG and there was a dwarf named Gorthek. He was grumpy, always ready for a fight and a good gunsmith. He was probably the only real character that I loved in my playing career and this design is my tribute of him."

2 SHEEYA THE JEDI KNIGHT "I've always loved the world of Star Wars and from this was born my very own Jedi. She's had various makeovers through the years, but this is one of my favourite versions of her."

2

IMAGINEFX CRIT



"I'm so glad Juri decided to finish her doodle of Dance with the Bullet. The use of an ornate frame draws your eye to the elegant dancer. The combination of steampunk influences and diagonal angles creates a dramatic and compelling image."
Daniel Vincent, Art Editor

FXPosé submissions to: fxpose@imaginefx.com



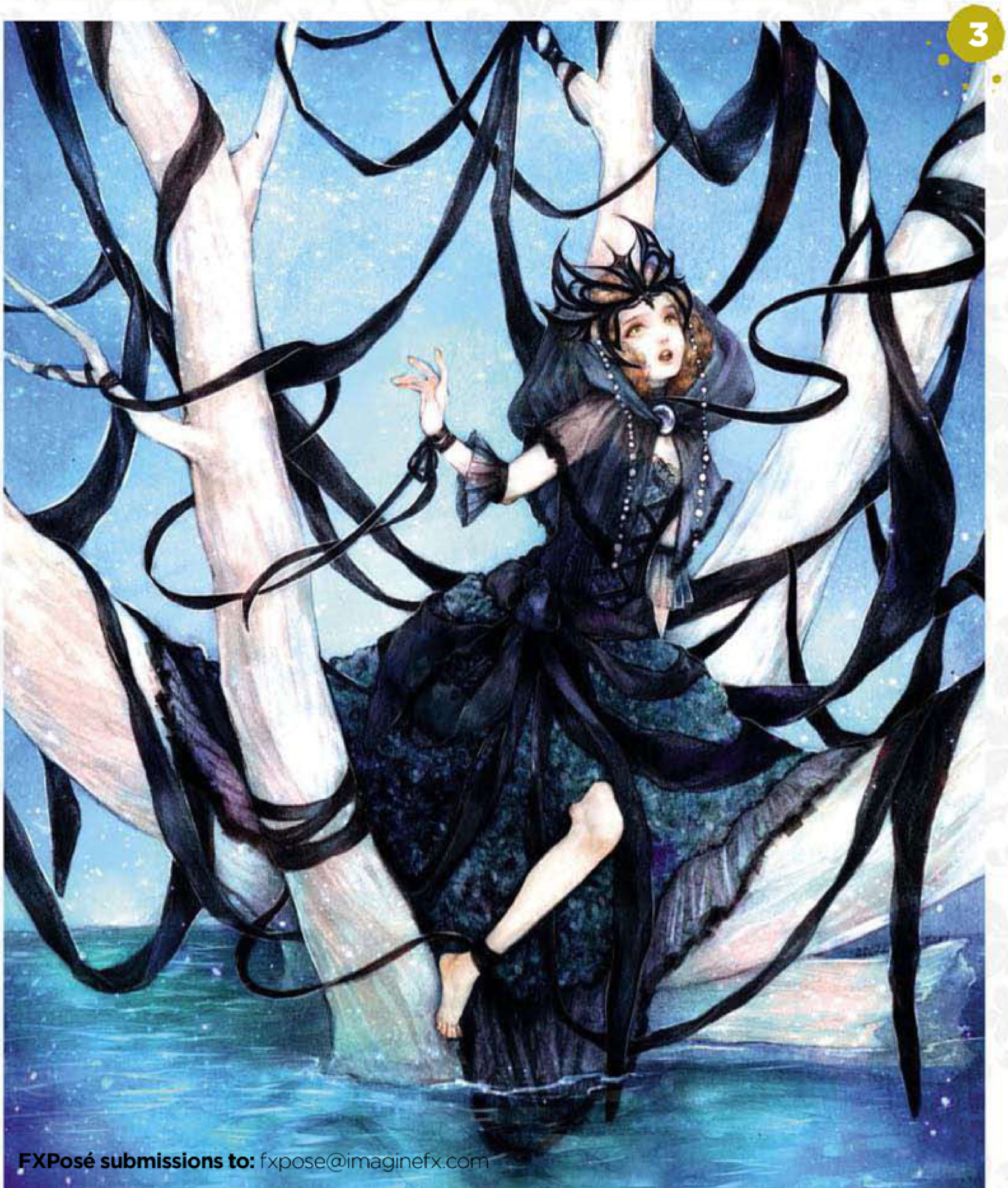
Juri Hayasaka Chinchilla

LOCATION: US
WEB: www.jurithedreamer.com
EMAIL: july705@hotmail.com
SOFTWARE: Photoshop



Juri came to the States from Japan to study at Philadelphia's University of the Arts in 2004, and stayed to work as a fantasy and anime artist. "It was a blessing that I managed to get a job here and stay in the US, as I love it here and have made great friends that push me with my art," she says.

As you may guess from her colourful and fanciful images, Juri's life is currently "filled with illusions of faeries, cakes and candies."



1 DANCE WITH THE BULLET "This was originally a doodle, then I decided to finish this as a digital drawing practice piece. I learned that to grow better as a digital artist I needed to be more patient."

2 BLESSING "The thinking behind this image is: be careful what you wish for, because a blessing isn't always what it seems. I had a hard time creating this piece; here's my third attempt. I think I'll keep trying to draw this until I feel I'm done with it."

3 DELUSIONIST "She sees the world we don't see and she's trapped in it. I always wanted to view the world from someone else's vantage point, finding out how different it is from mine."

SEND US YOUR ARTWORK!

Want to see your digital art grace these very pages? Send your work to us, along with an explanation of your techniques, the title of each piece of art, a photo of yourself and your contact details. Images should be sent as 300 DPI JPEG files, on CD or DVD. All artwork is submitted on the basis of a non-exclusive worldwide licence to publish, both in print and electronically.

You can also email submissions for FXPosé. Bear in mind that files must be no more than 5MB in total, or we won't receive them.
fxpose@imaginefx.com

SEND YOUR ARTWORK TO:
FXPosé
ImagineFX
30 Monmouth Street
Bath, BA1 2BW
UK

FXPosé submissions to: fxpose@imaginefx.com

StoreMags.com



Fairest in all the land

Tall tales The brand new Fables comic spin-off Fairest further expands the series's universe, with the help of Adam Hughes and friends, and some amazing art

It's been 10 years since Bill Willingham's comic folklore-fest Fables came out, making cover artist James Jean a household name. Now Bill's back, having released Fairest earlier this month, the latest mini-series to spring from the Fables world, and he's brought along his old pal Adam Hughes to produce some delectable covers, too.

If you know your fairy tales, you'll know there's no simple answer to 'who is the fairest of them all?', and with Adam Hughes painting a room packed full of beautiful fairy tale women in his wrap-around issue one cover, it's even trickier.



If there was ever a project tailor-made for the pin-up comic artist then it's this all-female comic series. "Actually, it's not all-female," corrects Adam. "'The fairest in all the land' includes some good-looking male Fables too. My only regret is Prince Charming died in the war with the Adversary and I really wanted a shot at drawing that handsome son-of-a-bitch."

Though Adam may be in comfortable territory with his subject matter, he's still trying new things. "I'm attempting to be more thoughtful with my compositions," he says, "like the cover for the third issue," (see the Snow Queen on page 22).

Old habits die hard, however, and you'll still see classic Adam Hughes in this new



DRUNK ON SUCCESS

Spaniard Felideus Bubastis got a message on a bottle. The artist received a surprise call from an Italian brewery, asking if he'd design art for its labels.
Page 23



CHEEKY MONKEYS

Frank Cho's Apes and Babes website is fast becoming a meeting point for artists with a similar sense of humour.
Page 25



A HIGH ACHIEVER

Aly Fell has often dreamed of living in a tower, but an attic studio will do for now. The artist shows us around his Manchester work space.
Page 26



"Fairest is a chance to show some love to Red Rose, Snow White, Rapunzel and others"

INDUSTRY INSIGHT

BILL WILLINGHAM

We talk to the creator of Fables and recent spin-off series Fairest

How do you explain the enduring appeal of Fables?
It's hard to say. Enduring is a pretty big word to use about a comic book series. Mountains endure, whereas Fables has been around for about 10 years. Still, that's pretty good for an extended story about talking cows and gun-wielding bunnies. We're a curious species. We want to know why and we want to know how, and we always want to know what happens next.

Did you have an artist wish list to work with on Fairest?
I have an artist wish list on every comic I write. I've been fortunate in getting many names on that list to do Fables stories, large and small. Fairest, in addition to its other qualities, doubles the opportunities to work with that list of the world's best comic artists.

What's been made and what's planned in the Fairest series?
If you look at the wrap-around cover to the first issue, you'll get a solid clue or two. We plan to tell stories about each of the characters depicted there. In addition, there are a few characters who didn't make that first cover, who'll be showing up. We wanted to keep a few things secret, after all.

Who comes first?
Well, our first tale (which was out in early March 2012) involved the continuing adventures of Sleeping Beauty and the Snow Queen. Then we'll have a short story that reveals something pretty surprising about one of the long-time Fables cast members. Our second large story arc centres around Rapunzel and our third introduces a new Fables character. And we soldier on from there.



As well as Fables, Bill's best known for creating Elementals, Ironwood, Coventry, Pantheon and Proposition Player.

www.billwillingham.com

series. "For rendering I'm using a method I've been working on for a few years," he explains. "Greyscale tonal drawings, done with Copic marker pens, then coloured up in Photoshop."

In fact this is the same technique that the artist used to create our striking Catwoman cover for issue 67 of ImagineFX. "I want all the Fairest covers to have that dreamy vibe that James Jean established with his Fables cover run," says the new pretender, "so I'll probably do all my Fairest covers this way."

With the covers in safe hands, the new series further expands the Fables universe,



which already includes the 50-issue spin-off Jack of Fables as well as two Cinderella mini series, developing characters and moving the action to new territory – literally. Penciller Inaki Miranda and his colourist

The wrap-around cover for issue one of Fairest gives a good indication of which characters will be appearing.

StoreMags

Continued from previous page...



For his third Fairest cover, Adam Hughes tried out a new composition.

Eva de la Cruz, and sci-fi/fantasy novelist Lauren Beukes took Rapunzel to Tokyo in their story arc The Hidden Kingdom (set just before the time-frame of issue one of Fables).



For Inaki the decision to come on board was easily made. "Bill has created such an astonishing web of perfectly defined characters, putting them in a world where fantasy and daily reality walk hand in hand." Bill has a more modest take on the Fairest's appeal. "Fables has become a book wherein we tell large, sprawling stories involving a big ensemble cast," he says, "where it's possible to overlook smaller stories about a single character – smaller, not in a sense of importance, but in focus." Indeed, Fairest is a chance to show some love to those characters, including Rose Red, Snow White, Thumbelina and Rapunzel.

Fairest introduced a new writer to comics – Lauren. Having won acclaim for her novel Zoo City, the author signed up for Fairest after a meeting with Bill at Montreal's WorldCon in 2009. "I'm very aware that I'm playing in Bill's world with his characters. But at the same time he's given me a lot of freedom to go where I want with a character who has been, until recently, mainly in the background," says Lauren of Rapunzel.

Read more about Fairest and take a closer look at the art here: **www.bit.ly/ifx-fairest**.



Art odyssey

Feline fun Michigan-based artist Casey Sorrow illustrates the 1936 James Joyce children's story The Cats of Copenhagen

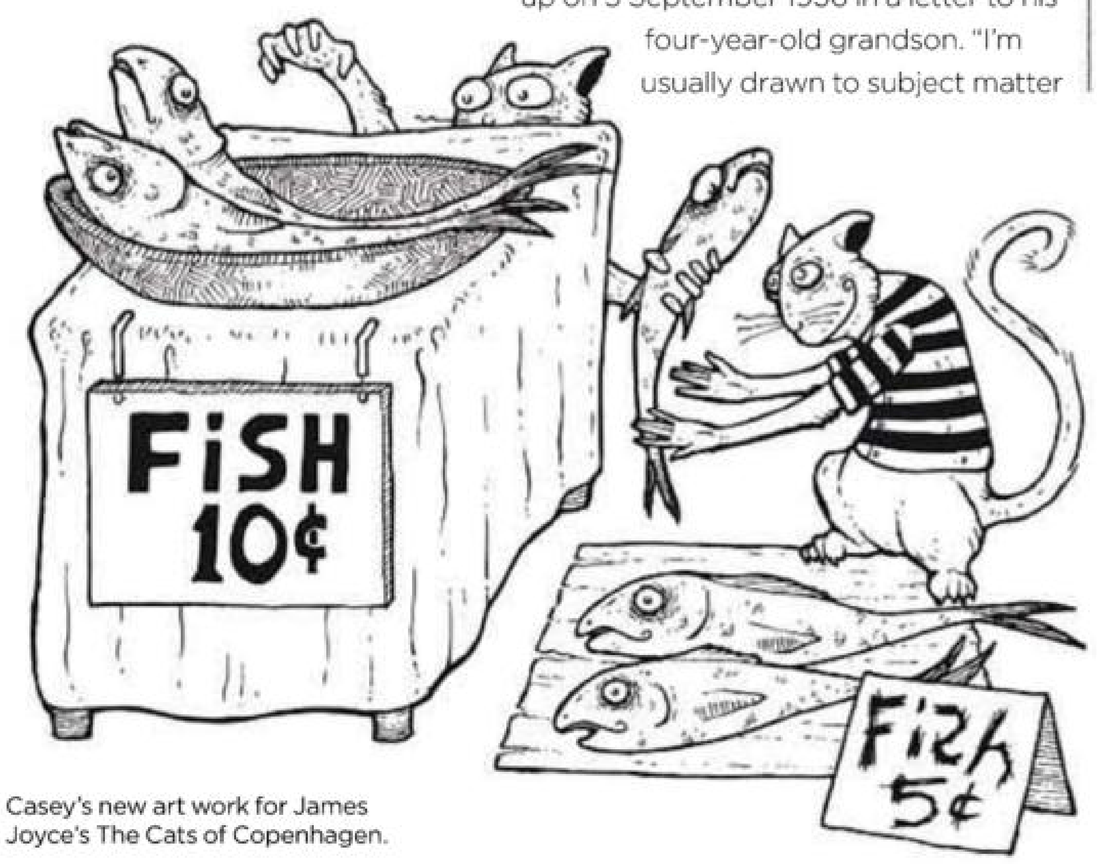


He may have a reputation for creating impenetrable modernist literature, but James Joyce also wrote kid's stories. Just ask US illustrator Casey Sorrow.

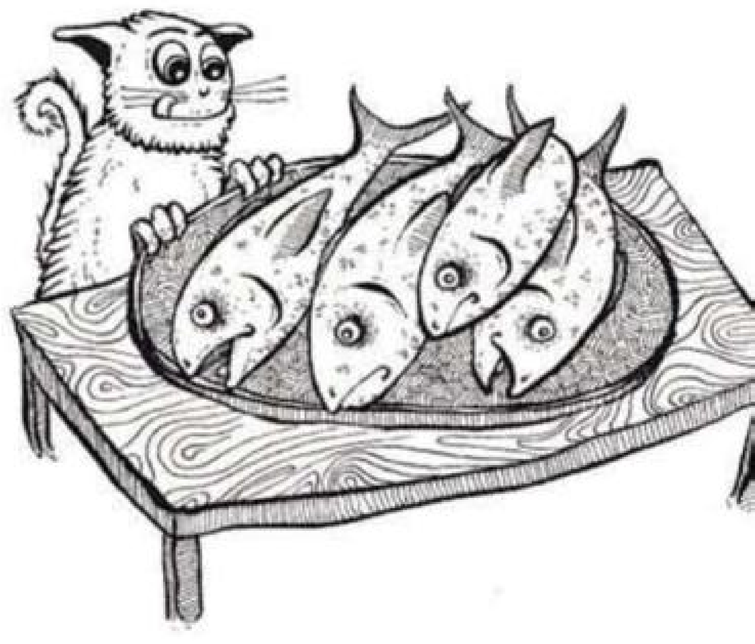
In January Casey provided pen and ink illustrations to Ithys Press's The Cats of Copenhagen, a story Joyce dreamt up on 5 September 1936 in a letter to his four-year-old grandson. "I'm usually drawn to subject matter that has elements of the absurd, with some tweak to an otherwise normal reality," says Casey, "and The Cats of Copenhagen has that. And of course illustrating the first edition of a never-before published work by James Joyce is a pretty rare opportunity."

The Cats of Copenhagen was published for the first time, due to James Joyce's writings falling into Europe's public domain, in January 2012.

See Casey's art: **www.bit.ly/ifx-jj**



Casey's new art work for James Joyce's The Cats of Copenhagen.



Joyce's story was published for the first time in January.



"This was a fun concept image, showing ominous craft coming down onto a derelict city."



In this piece from the book Gary explains how to create depth and atmosphere.

Readers' letters

Sharpening skills After 2008's successful Bold Visions, Gary Tonge's new art book promises 100 new tricks and techniques



For Gary Tonge's new art book Digital Painting: Tricks & Techniques, he let fans dictate some of the content. "I get emailed a lot about my methods in dealing with specific art problems," he tells us. Luckily, Gary makes detailed notes about solving these problems.

Digital Painting is a follow-up to 2008's Bold Visions. "This new book [out now] has more techniques in it than Bold Visions," says Gary, "and isn't quite as focused on the ground-up construction of individual pictures of mine." That said, the content is all Gary's artwork, and was put together around his job as conceptual art director at Codemasters.

Aimed at beginners right through to advanced artists, Gary aims to show how to make readers' workflow more efficient, "and hopefully more enjoyable," he adds.

For more information go to **www.visionafar.com**.

StoreMags.com

Binge drawing

Drinking games While working on his own art book, Felideus was surprised to receive a call from an open-minded Italian brewery...

Beer and fantasy art – it's an irresistible combination that Spanish artist Felideus Bubastis



believes should be enjoyed more often. And he should know. Commissioned by Italian brewery Buskers Beer, he recently completed a series of beer labels filled with his sleepy, surreal fantasy art. It remains, says the artist, one of the strangest yet most satisfying jobs he's ever done.

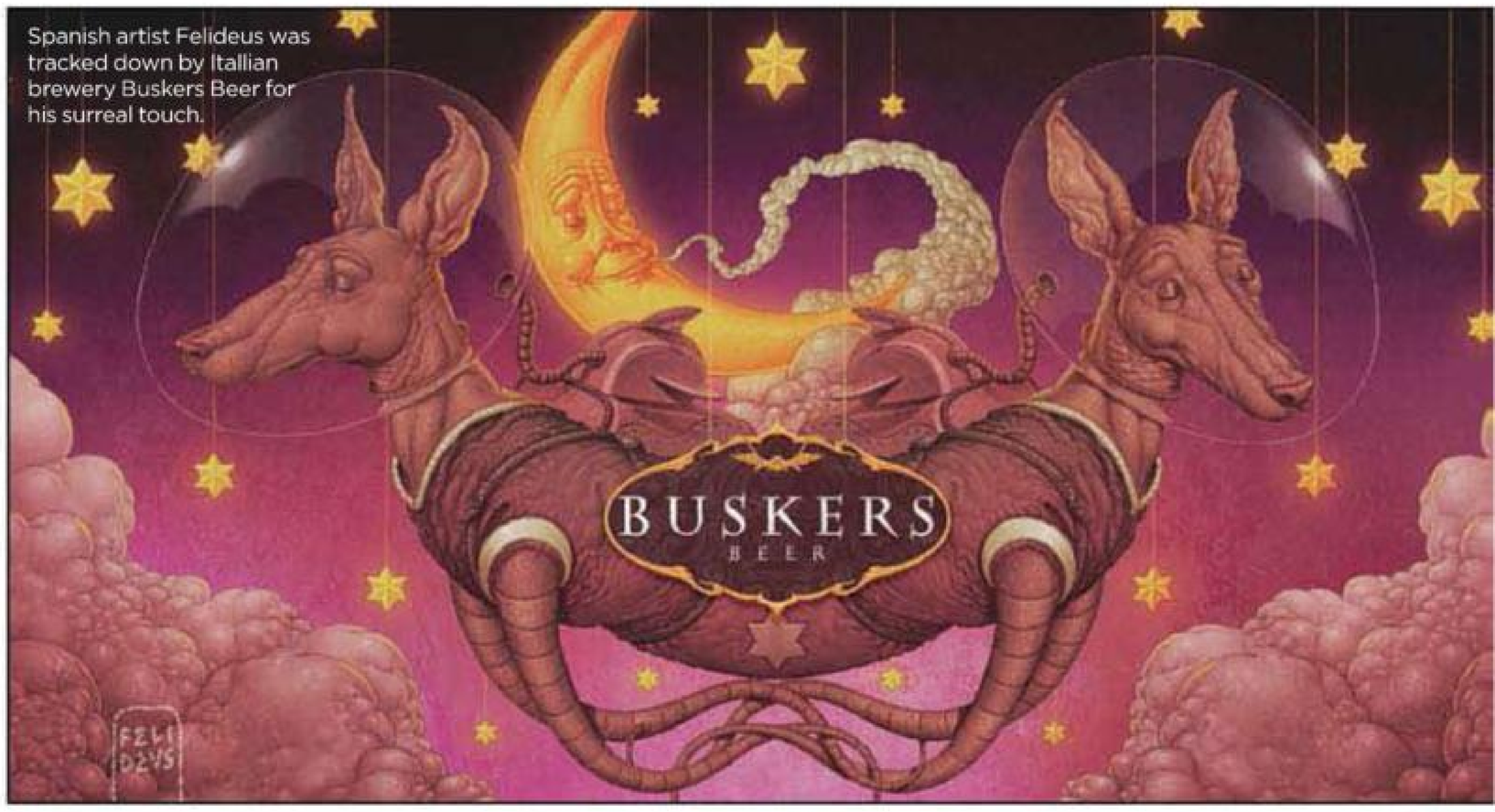
Felideus got the chance to put his varied and colourful art career to good use on this project. "I've worked in different fields – advertising, animation, graphic design, multimedia, web design and so on," he says, "but I never thought I'd be producing a series of beer bottle labels."

Even with a tradition of elaborate labels on artisan beers around the world, his work for Buskers remains a little unorthodox. "Most beer labels are focused on the brand and the logo of the beer, but we wanted to do fully illustrated labels, with a relatively small logo," explains Felideus. Given complete artistic freedom, it's his illustrations that take centre stage and, with this series of beers selling fast, they've been a resounding success.

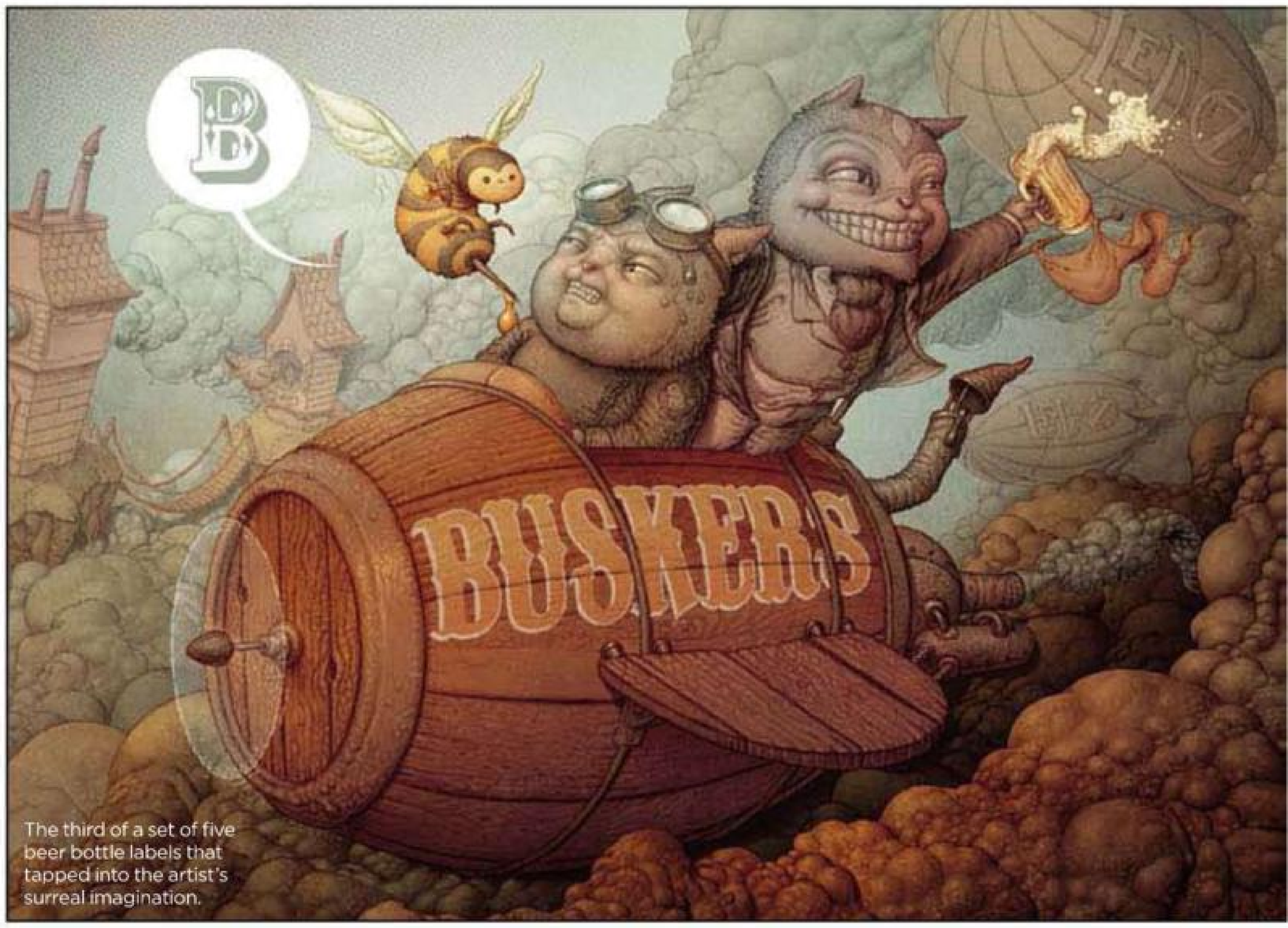
Throughout this unique job, Felideus was working on his new art book The Automatic Forest. "It's a hybrid between a classic illustrated book and a comic," he tells us. "The aesthetic is a mix of classic fairy tales, hermetic symbolism and surrealism."

With plans to release the book in early 2013, Felideus might hang on to a couple of his Busker beers to toast its publication.

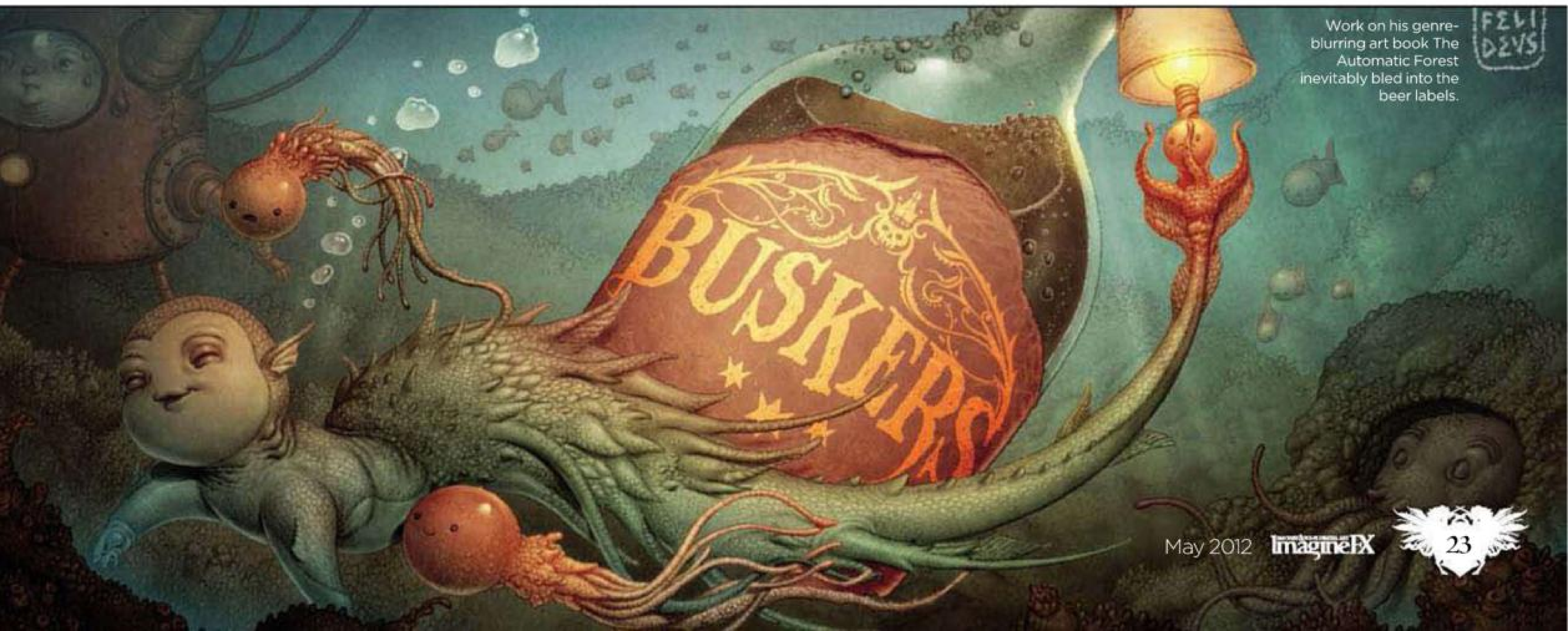
You can see more of the varied art of Felideus Bubastis at **www.felideus.blogspot.com**.



Spanish artist Felideus was tracked down by Itallian brewery Buskers Beer for his surreal touch.



The third of a set of five beer bottle labels that tapped into the artist's surreal imagination.



Work on his genre-blurring art book The Automatic Forest inevitably bled into the beer labels.

In short...

The latest news in brief for digital artists



RIP **Adam Adamowicz**

It didn't get the same coverage as Jean Giraud or Ralph McQuarrie, but the death of concept artist Adam Adamowicz in February was just as sad. Best known for work on Fallout 3 and Skyrim, Adam was 43 when he lost his battle with cancer.
www.bit.ly/zW2lNx



Apps **Photoshop Touch for iPad**

iPad 'iArtists' will be pleased to hear that Photoshop Touch is available through the App Store (for the iPad 2 only). Touch sports core features of the 'Shop, including editing, painting and extracting. It's optimised for finger-to-screen technology and costs £6.99/$9.99.
www.adobe.ly/vpsPIe



Shows **Greenlight Summit in May**

ConceptArt.org's new Greenlight Summit workshop (21-27 May) gets off to a great start with 100 speakers from the games, entertainment and media worlds taking part. There's a chance to network, get pro feedback and more – all online.
www.greenlightsummit.com



Life is Humiliation

by Matt Boyce



Fantasy talk Explaining the inexplicable

"The 90s version, with the jacket, belts and biker shorts was the absolute worst – everything that was bad about 90s comics"

We're quite partial to biker shorts, but Alex Garner thinks they don't suit Wonder Woman... *Page 52*

End of the road

Copyright ruling With Gary Friedrich legally prevented from producing any "unauthorised" work, is there trouble ahead for artists?

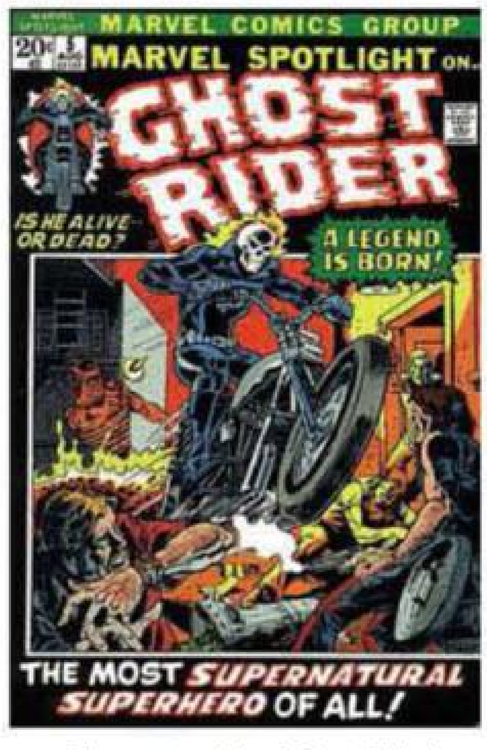
The recent end to artist Gary Friedrich's lawsuit against Marvel Comics has prompted cries of concern among the artist community. Gary co-created the Ghost Rider (GR) character and comic while working for Marvel in the 70s. In 2007 – when the first GR film was released – he filed a lawsuit against Marvel, Sony Pictures and others, alleging he was the sole creator of GR and that Marvel was infringing his rights.

In 2010 Marvel counter-sued, seeking damages against Friedrich for selling his own GR merchandise, such as sketches, to the tune of $17,000 in damages. Gary lost the case last year, and Marvel has agreed to drop the suit provided he pays the money and stops selling any "unauthorised" GR material.

Other complications aside, this has raised fears that artists may be sued for, or prevented from producing, for example, sketches of characters at fan conventions. Artist Ben Templesmith (**www.templesmith.com**) doesn't think this will be the case, however. "Marvel wants to keep the con sketching alive," he says, "and it's said in interviews that it won't be doing that.



"The relationship between artists and the fans is a unique one. Not many other industries ever have such community outreach and involvement."



The exact origin of Ghost Rider has caused all sorts of squabbles.

TM & © 2012 Marvel

It's pretty obvious, adds Ben, that making reproductions of characters you don't own is never a good idea. "Original art though? Well, those are one-off unique items. We really need lawyers to explain things and publishers to maybe issue some more guidance, so everyone can feel a little safer perhaps."

In the lawsuit against Marvel, the judge said Gary Friedrich had given up all ownership rights when he signed "checks containing language relinquishing all rights".

It's Cho time

Sketch blog Frank Cho admirers find a new source of inspiration with their own spin-off blog



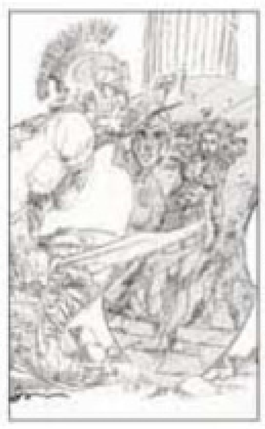
Are you a Friend of Cho? Frank Cho, that is, the artist and writer behind the rather saucy comic book Liberty Meadows. Artist and writer Erik Burnham certainly is, and it was while he was exploring Frank Cho's Apes and Babes website (www.apesandbabes.com) that he had the idea of setting up a kind of spin-off for the artists and writers – the self-titled Friends of Cho – who hung out there.

"The premise of the blog is simple, and pretty commonplace – we pick a theme each week and do up a sketch," says Erik. "We started out kind of abstract in our themes, stuff like 'samurai', but moved to character-based themes to make things easier."

People like Steven E Grant, Axel Medellin and Scott Christian Sava regularly rise to the challenge, and more are welcome. "At first we put a limit on participants just to try to keep things from getting out of hand – but as we're coming up on six months, things have evened out," Erik says. "The best way to get involved is to start posting and showing your stuff at the Apes and Babes boards, join the community and get to know the group. It's a blog born out of a community, so join the community!"

There's one unspoken rule: don't take yourself too seriously. "We have similar senses of humour to Frank, the Monkey King, and have you seen the babes Axel and Steve draw?"

Check out **www.focsketch.blogspot.com** for more.



There's plenty more art like this on the Apes and Babes spin-off site.



Although the site doesn't take itself too seriously, giant squids are a pretty serious situation.

Admissions are OPEN for Spring term

First of its kind ONLINE school with specilized training in 3D Modeling and VFX for Digital Production

WWW.VIRINCHIVFX.COM

- Learn VFX like never before!! from the comfort of your home
- Curriculum developed by a Professional for a Professional
- Industry Professionals guiding you to meet Industry Requirements
- Project driven training with Industry standards and pipline
- Affordable fee structure!! Be the VFX artist you always dreamt about
- Visit www.virinchivfx.com now to register and get attractive discounts on tution fee

FREE Virinchi Merchandise on enrollment*

CHOOSE YOUR PATH IN VFX INDUSTRY

VIRINCHI
School of Visual Effects

Corporate Office: 58/A,S.V.C.I.E, Balanagar, Hyderabad- 500 037. Andhra Pradesh, INDIA.

Tel: +91-40-64558783, Fax: +91-40-23771930, Mobile: +91-897 870 0888.

Email: contact@virinchivfx.com, admissions@virinchivfx.com

deviantART

+deviantWATCH

Here are some of the many gems we found on the pages of deviantART...



Carsten Biernat

www.bit.ly/casten

This German comic artist recently put up some great art for the Logan's Run: Aftermath comics, and with "a lot of new projects" in the pipeline, we think this'll be a site to come back to. There are loads of iconic characters here, and his 100 One Hour Portraits image is a treat.



Christoph Peters von Sperling

www.trejoeeee.deviantart.com

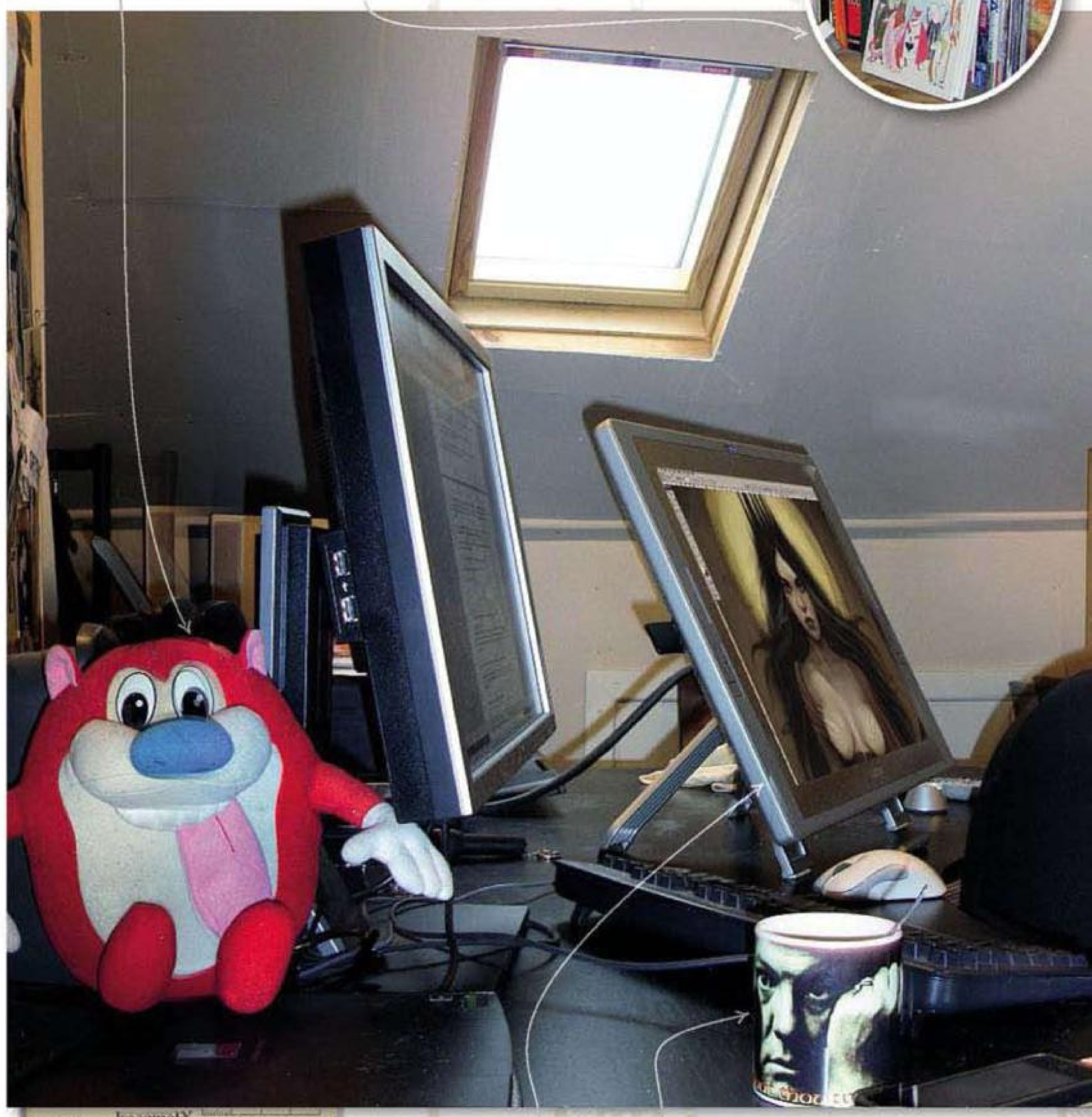
True, with an image of a hand puppet sitting on the toilet, Christoph's dA site may not shout out "great digital art", but delve a little and there's plenty to be found. In fact, he does subtle character detail as good as dynamic poster-style imagery.



Gabriel Iumazark

www.iumazark.deviantart.com

With a thin, crisp pencil, ink and digital style, Brazilian artist Gabriel's images pack a visceral punch. In the mostly portrait art here there's a lot of texture work to find, and with the odd purely digital piece in the style of Sparth, Gabriels's deviantART site has plenty going for it.



If you squeeze this toy it breaks wind. A present from a very good friend – cheers Tony!

Alice's Adventures in Wonderland, illustrated by Tove Jansson of The Moomins fame. I wanted this book for years, but could never find it. Then one day I was browsing Amazon and there it was!

I saved for ages to get this Wacom Cintiq, and value it enormously.

Why anyone would want to put The Great Beast on a mug!? Useful for supplying coffee though, or summoning Choronzon...

ImagineFX ARTIST IN RESIDENCE

Aly Fell

Fantasy castles The pin-up artist takes us on a tour of his attic studio, and tells us how he finds solace in the words of Indiana Jones's dad...



When I was a kid I thought it would be great to live in a high castle tower, where I could see all the countryside for miles around, a bit like Herbert does in Monty Python and the Holy Grail, or Saralinda in The Thirteen Clocks by James Thurber.

Well, my tower is the attic, my castle is a terrace house in Manchester, and if I look out the skylight I can just see something green that may or not be a tree. But it suits me – I can hide away up here and just get on with it. We converted it from the old Victorian attic with old Victorian dust and old Victorian spiders about 18 months ago, and I probably spend a good 10-plus hours a day scribbling away on my Cintiq up here.

I don't have a state-of-the-art PC: it's my old one from when I worked in computer

I worked for Core Design for a while. Just missed working on the fourth Tomb Raider, but I got a statuette for my time there at least. A bit like an Oscar I suppose. Or not.

Maxwell the Magic Cat by Jill de Ray. Jill de Ray is a pseudonym for Alan Moore and a play on the name Gilles de Rais. I love Alan Moore's writing, and Maxwell used to be in our local Northampton newspaper when I lived down there. Witty and clever writing for a strip cartoon.



games two years ago, and it runs Windows XP which I still prefer to anything since, with 3.5GB of RAM, and lots of internal and external hard-drives to constantly back things up on. (I worked in computer games; a baptism of fire when it comes to saving files!) The Cintiq is my favourite piece of tech in the set-up, as it enables me to emulate traditional sketching in a digital way, and has a great immediacy to it, not that I don't spend ages tweaking and twiddling. My favourite phrase has become 'Indiana... let it go!'

I tend to start working in the morning about 10.30 after frenetic peddling on my cycle machine for about 45 minutes and two cups of coffee. Or one, if my wife and I are feeling like something stronger and we have some 'Wawa' coffee from Pennsylvania in the house, which her stepmother sends her. Life would be a sadder experience without coffee, and chocolate of course. After emails, internet, the inevitable Facebook, I start scribbling.



I'm surrounded by lots of books and 'stuff' for inspiration. The internet is fine for that burst of creative juice, but books give you something a little more elegant to nourish the brain.

Bed is often about two in the morning, so I suppose that makes me a night bird rather than a morning person. In fact, avoid me in the mornings – I'm likely to be pretty grumpy before a cup of Wawa!

English artist Aly has carved out a name for himself painting sci-fi and fantasy pin-ups. You can check out his art at www.darkrising.co.uk.

This is a purely personal piece, and an early attempt to honour one of my pin-up heroes, Gil Elvgren.



A letter from Whoopee comic congratulating me on winning that week's 'World Wide Weirdies', with my sketch of The Statue of Stupidity in 1975. I was quite small and very happy to get a £2 postal order for my troubles. I think it went on Lucky Bags and Sherbert Dabs.













PLANET OF THE ARTS



HERE'S A RUNDOWN OF THE EVENTS AND ART BLOGS THAT HAVE GOT US IN A STIR THIS MONTH. IF YOU'VE GOT A STORY OR EVENT THAT SHOULD BE FEATURED HERE, SEND US THE DETAILS: **PLANET@IMAGINEFX.COM**. CHEERS!

Beren Neale, Staff Writer







TALES OF A FRAGMENTED WORLD

Art blog | US

1 Tales... is a blog page that features the whimsical, dark work of Karin and Murielle Regenass. There's plenty of disquieting yet beautiful art here.

www.bit.ly/fragworld

AWESOME HORSE STUDIOS

Online art demos | US

2 "Live streaming art demos & critiques every week," and you can't say fairer than that. Join them on Saturdays, 2pm EST. You can even suggest a topic and get talking.

www.awesomehorsestudios.com

NUTHIN BUT MECH

Art site | US

3 If you're into all things metallic, you won't go wrong here. There are models, sketches and paintings galore, and the guys behind the site have a book coming out in July.

www.nuthinbutmech.blogspot.com

MICROVISIONS 7

Charity art collection | US

4 Irene Gallo and co have selected their 12 artists to create 12 miniatures. Results will be exhibited in New York and then the public can bid for them. It's all for charity, too.

www.bit.ly/ifx-mini

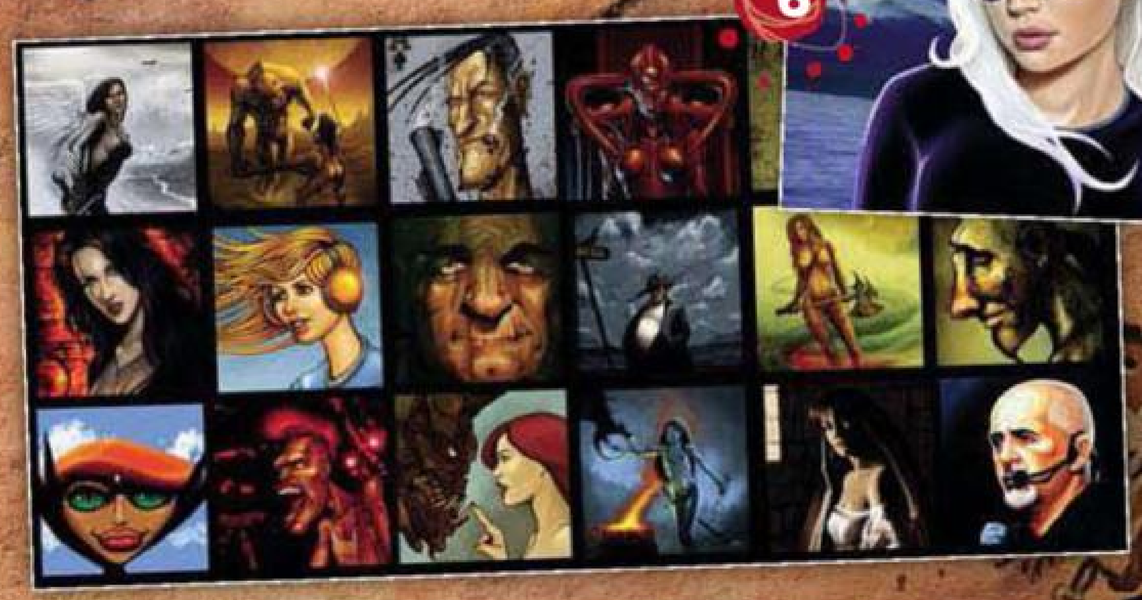






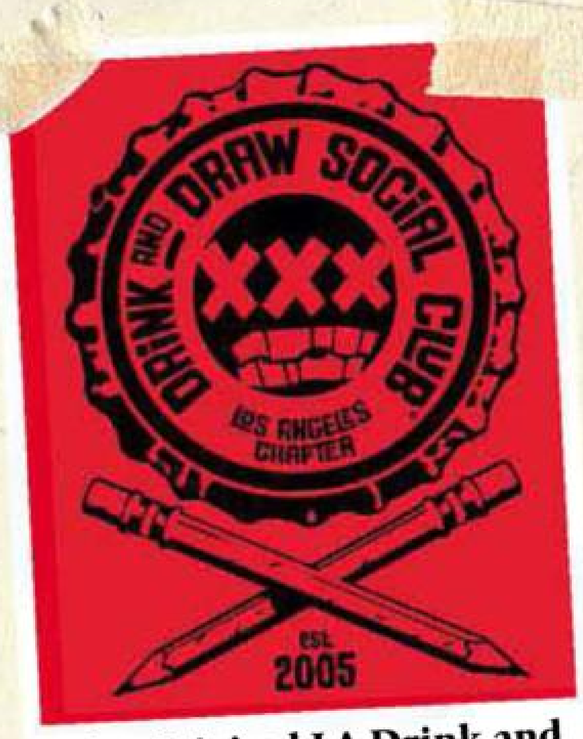






SKETCH JAM

These guys have been exporting their brand of pub-sketching since 2005, and they're on the lookout for new members!

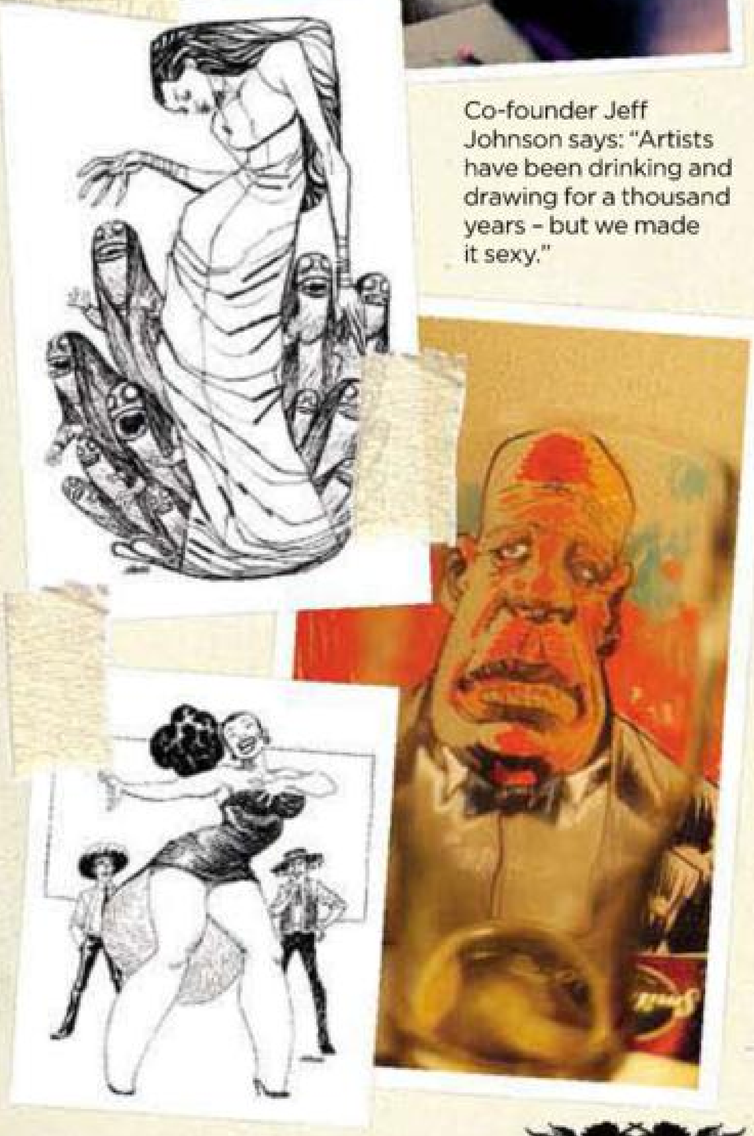


The Original LA Drink and Draw Social Club

LOCATION: email for details on originaldrinkanddraw@gmail.com
WHEN: weekly
WEB: www.bit.ly/drinkdrawsc



Co-founder Jeff Johnson says: "Artists have been drinking and drawing for a thousand years – but we made it sexy."



HYSTERICAL MINDS

Hispanic art | Spain

5 Claiming to be the only online collective that uses the 'Hispanic language' (although there's English too!), there are regular art activities to view here.

www.hystericalminds.com

DAVE EDWARDS

Regular caricatures | South Africa

6 The artist behind the web comic Ramiro – Rock Vulture, Dave also has a blog and website, where you'll be able to catch his recent caricatures, sketches and paintings.

www.artcore.co.za

storemags.com

Map art by Jonny Duddle, www.duddlebug.com

storemags.com

FANTASY & SCI-FI DIGITAL ART ImagineFX Forum

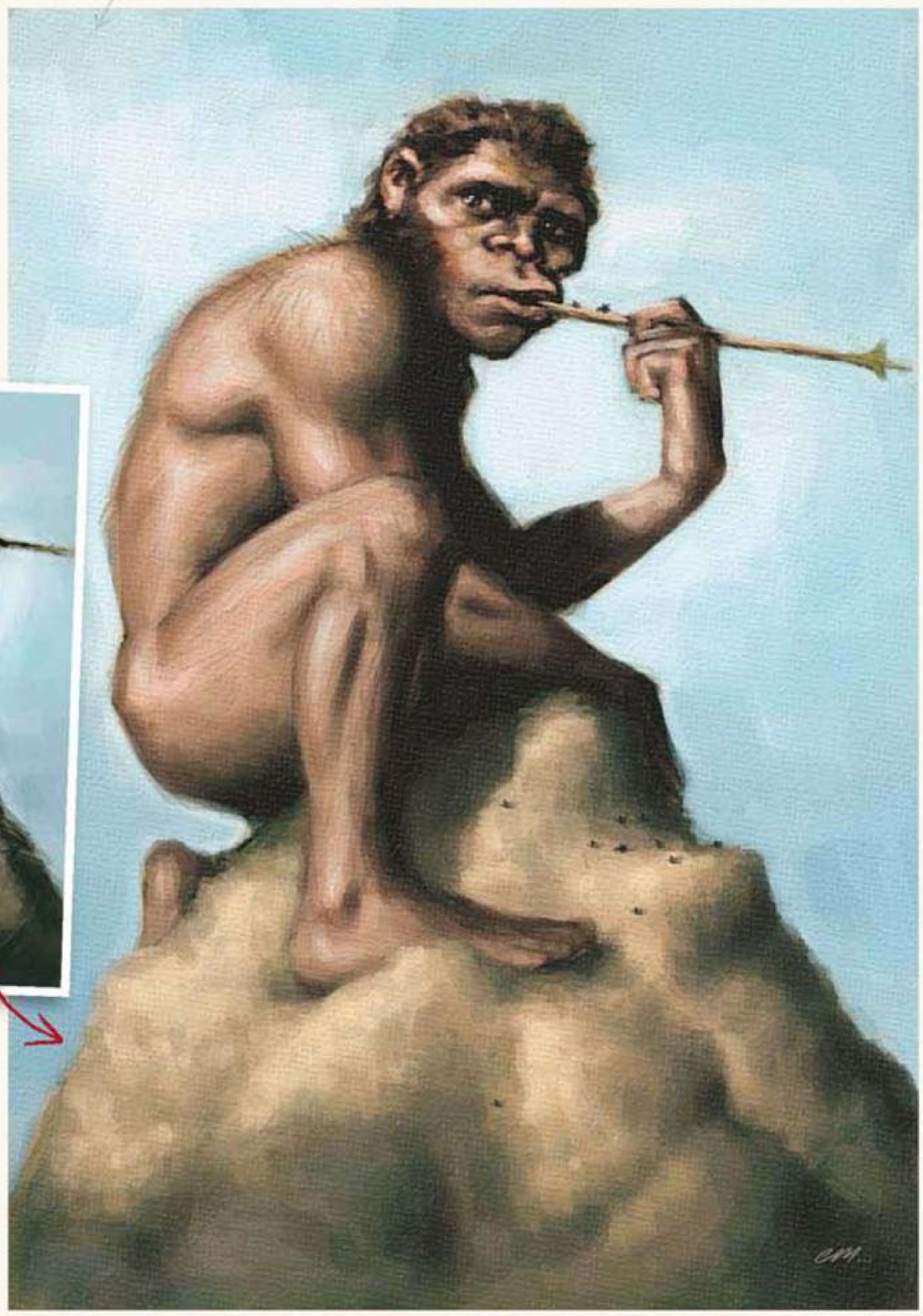
Winners

Image of the month

Ancient art Sometimes childhood memories can provide the perfect inspiration for a piece of art…







Euan used the stick to imply the man-ape had a level of intelligence– he's using it as a tool to extract and eat ants.



It's nice when a reference pops into your head for an art challenge, but not everyone has images of prehistoric skeletons in theirs. "The main inspiration for my Missing Link was Lucy, the Australopithecus afarensis skeleton discovered in the 1970s," says Euan. The artist even has childhood memories of the skeleton being called a 'missing link'.

"I wanted to imply intelligence, hence the use of tools," he says. "Rather than the usual caveman spear, I decided to depict the practice, which some modern chimps have, of feeding on termites that have been coaxed from their mound by a stick."

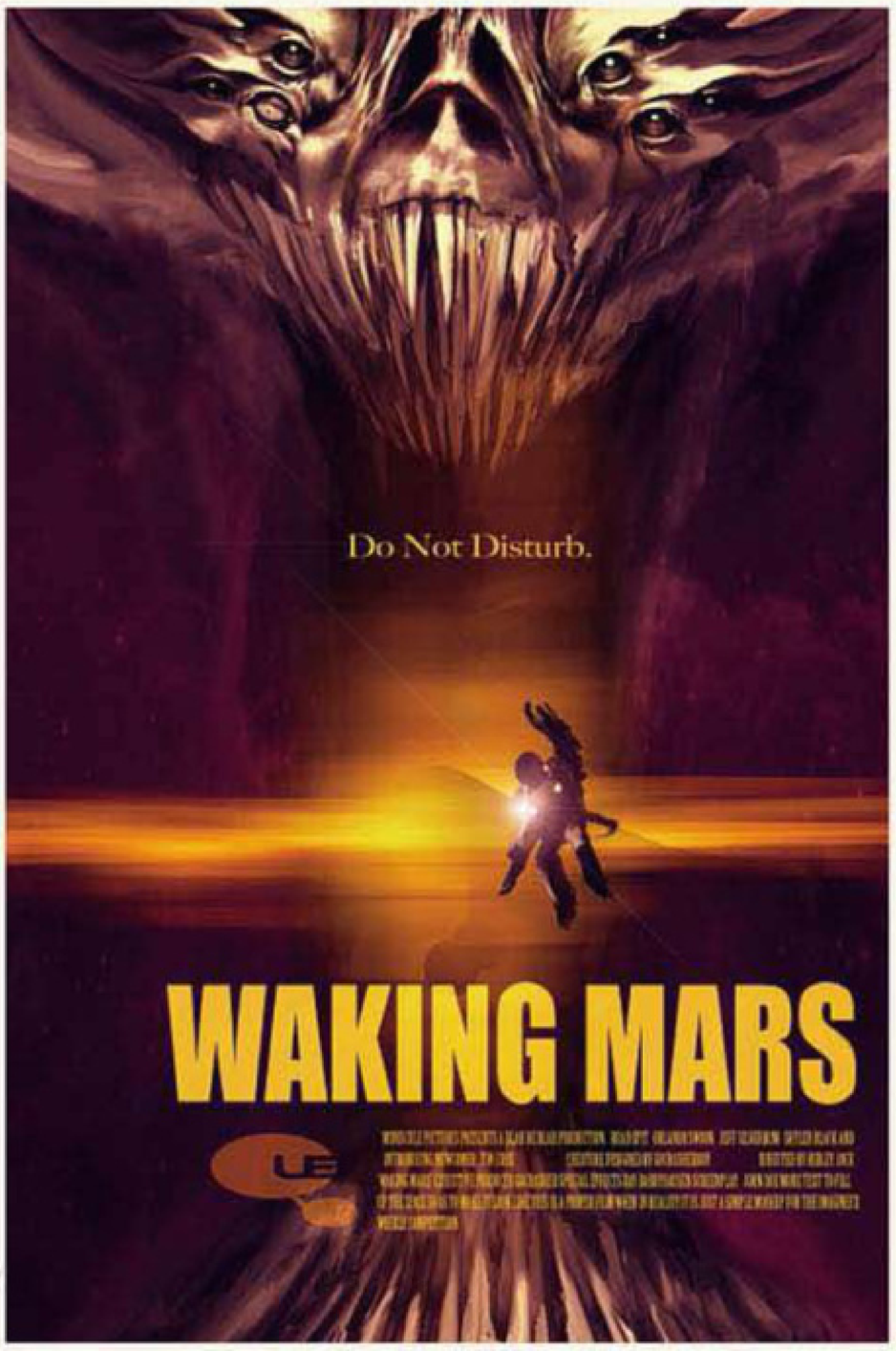
MYFX TITLE: The Missing Link
WINNER: Euan Mactavish (Em…)
GALLERY: www.imaginefx.com/em

IMAGINEFX CRIT



"The expression absolutely makes this piece. The simple style and muted colours are all brought to life by the convincing spark of human intelligence in the man-ape's eyes. Wonderfully understated!"
Richard Sampson (Arthur Ritus)

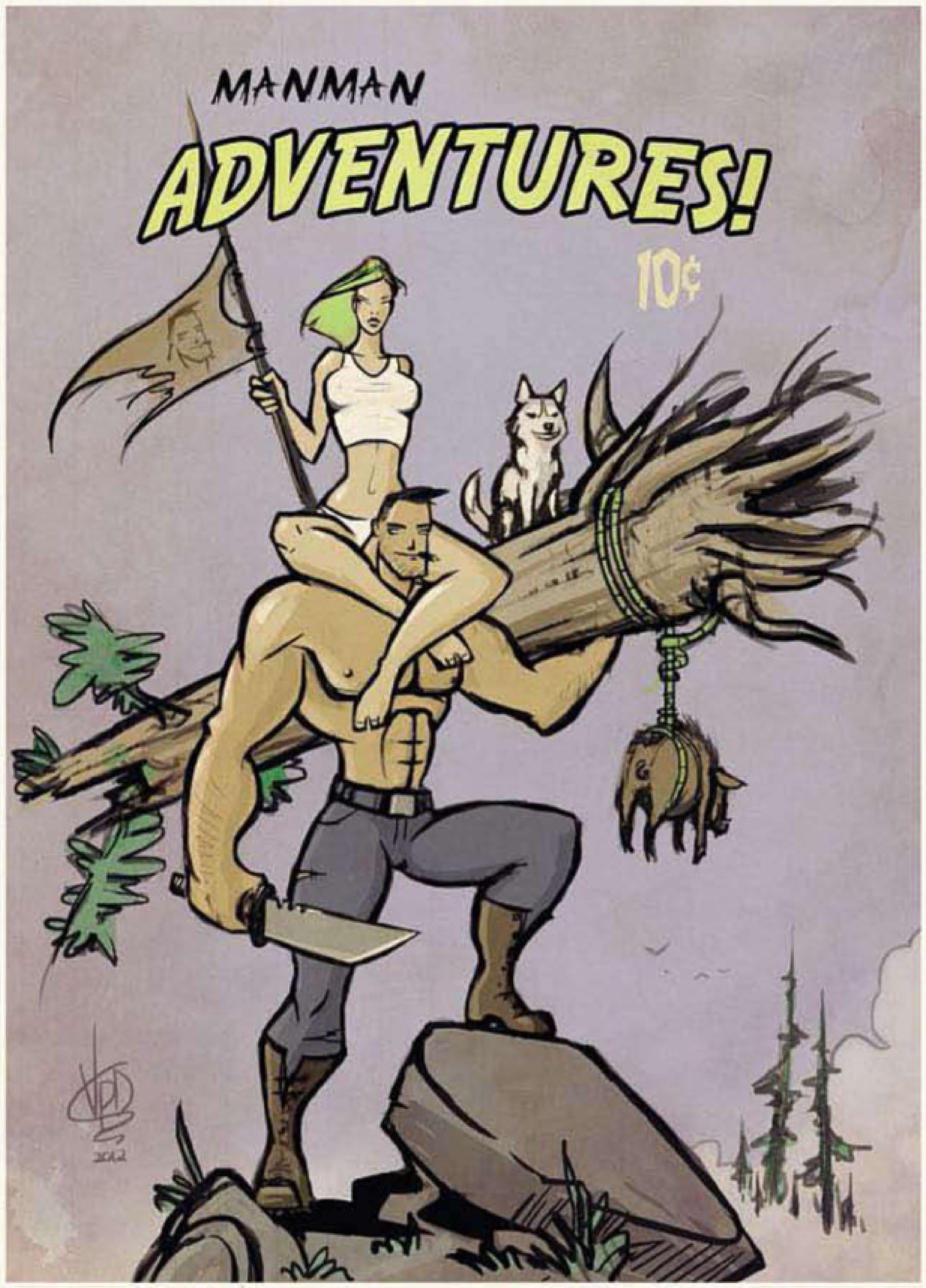
Join in!
www.imaginefx.com/myfx



MYFX TITLE: Waking Mars
WINNER: Ian Core (g8crasherboy)
GALLERY: www.imaginefx.com/g8crasherboy



"I love old-school 70s/80s horror film posters, such as Alien and Jaws, so I jumped at the chance of creating an image in homage to those masterpieces. Another bonus was drawing a scary monster – it's a guilty pleasure of mine – but leaving enough to the imagination to promote intrigue."



MYFX TITLE: Manman
WINNER: Varuna Darensbourg (Adventuregoat)
GALLERY: www.imaginefx.com/adventuregoat



"I was inspired by this challenge's over-the-top theme. The overall composition came together pretty fast once I narrowed things down. I try not to turn everything into a comic cover, but the image just gravitated in that direction as I worked."



MYFX TITLE: Santa's School of Rock
WINNER: Wayne O Connor (DoctorDark)
GALLERY: www.imaginefx.com/doctordark



"My normal work is more typically fantasy and sci-fi illustrations, but the challenge was an excuse to break from my normal style and do something more cartoony. From that point of view, it was good fun to just render something silly – well worth having a go."

Letters

YOUR FEEDBACK & OPINIONS



Contact the editor, Claire Howlett, on claire@imaginefx.com or write to ImagineFX, Future Publishing, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, BA1 2BW, UK

Follow us on twitter: www.twitter.com/imaginefx

Tell us your thoughts on: www.facebook.com/imaginefx



Every month ImagineFX features work from emerging artists in our FXPose section.

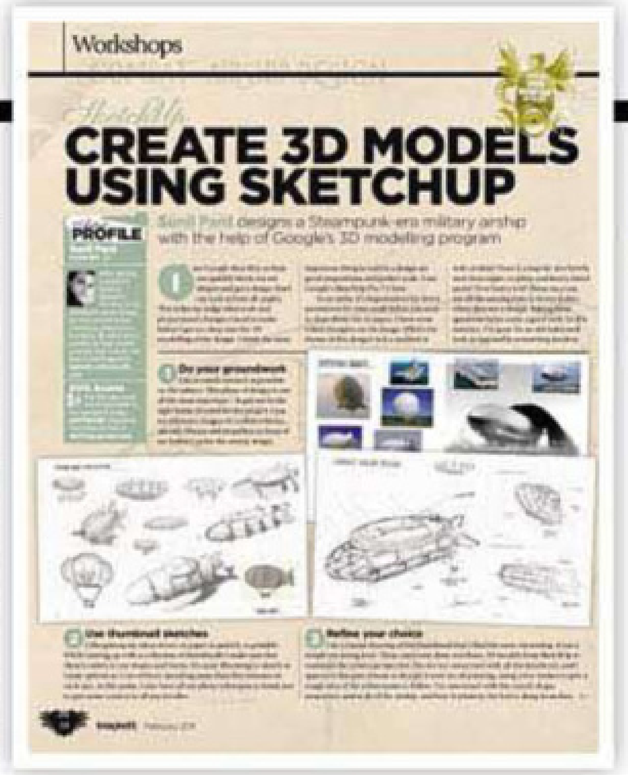
Submissive artists

I've been a collector of ImagineFX magazine for three years. I'm a 20-year-old student and iPad digital artist and I noticed in the January issue that there was a workshop based on the iPad. How do works get in the magazine? Does the artist pay, or are artists selected to appear? Parts of my overall portfolio are uploaded to the ImagineFX website: username: Dubo_0. I really appreciate any feedback. Thank you.
Adam Du Buisson, via email

Claire replies Hello Adam. Artists don't pay to appear in the magazine. We accept submissions for our FXPosé section and you can find information on how to submit your art at the end of FXPosé every month (see page 19). There's also a permanent link on our website that details how to submit your art for inclusion in the magazine. Please visit **www.imaginefx.com/submit**.

Diamond geezers

Although many have said it before me, I would like to add my voice to the chorus of thank-yous for such a wonderful and helpful magazine. When I discovered ImagineFX it answered a real need I had. The support and advice works and is very easy to follow – an area where so may other books and magazines have fallen down. I also didn't realise how expansive the field of illustration was. The level of work featured in ImagineFX is staggering, yet I have found myself more inspired than intimidated. So again, a big thank you!



Dominic Kearns says our tutorials "work" and make him feel more inspired than intimidated. Though he would like a feature or two including GIMP software.

Because I simply can't afford them, I don't have any of the apps that you often feature (Photoshop and the like); however, I do have the free software GIMP. Would it be possible to feature an article or two on this app? Alternatively, how about some examples of what your oft-featured artists are able to produce using budget-end software? It would be extremely useful and much appreciated if it could be made to happen. Thank you for all your work, the back-up and the feeling that ImagineFX is all about encouraging improvement, not perfection. You're all diamonds!
Dominic Kearns, via email

Claire replies Dominic, we never tire of praise! Thank you for your kind words. Getting emails from readers always lifts our spirits, especially when we're on deadline. We've provided Google SketchUp and GIMP workshops in the past, and will do more in the future. In the meantime, why not try the free software on this issue's DVD?

Unfortunate disc-overy

I'm from Mexico and I'm a big fan of ImagineFX. I want to buy some past digital issues but, seriously, without the DVD content it loses half of its attractiveness. Maybe you could find a way to upload these contents and share with whoever has a code or something? The digital option must be complete for all who can't find the magazine but who want old issues or just want non-printed versions.
LDG Felipe Ojeda Acevedo, via email

Claire replies We are looking into ways to provide our disc assets for our digital readers, so as soon as we work out the best way, disc content will be yours! (This may take some time.) For readers who want to check out our digital editions, we're now available on even more devices, some with free trials, or free editions. Please see the opposite page for more info.



DID YOU MISS ISSUE 81?
We've still got a few copies, but you need to move fast! See page 92 for details on how to get hold of one.



Our star letter writer wins a dA Premium Membership!

- Browse more content more quickly
- Customise your profile page
- Receive exclusive discounts & offers
- And more!

Get Num-chucks' skills

Hello Claire. I'm a fan of ImagineFX and it helped me attain a new level of skill. I live in South Africa and my name is Nhlanhla but you can call me Num-chucks or Chucks.

I have a problem. I couldn't learn the digital part of the ImagineFX 'How to be a Games Artist' [issue 75], because I don't have a tablet to draw on or Photoshop to work with. I'm a 14-year-old boy and I'm awesome in art. I'm good at manga, realism and the like. Here is some of my work. But these are just simple things compared to my real work.
Nhlanhla Sandile Kumalo, via email

Claire replies
Well Chucks, thanks for your email and images. I can't help you with getting a tablet, unfortunately, but we do have software trials on our DVD that will help you get a feel of Photoshop. Or you could try a cheaper software tool, like ArtRage, or GIMP, like reader Dominic mentions on the left? Good luck with your progress!



South Africa-based 14-year-old Chucks sent us the hand-drawn image above. Impressive stuff, we're sure you'll agree. Keep it up!

ImagineFX Now available as a digital magazine!

You can now enjoy ImagineFX on **iPad**, **iPhone**, **Nook**, or on your **desktop** or **Android** phone.

Whatever device you've got, you can now draw your usual monthly inspiration from ImagineFX at the click of a button any time, anywhere...

Single issues and subscriptions are available and each purchase is permanently stored in your own magazine library.



iPad, iPhone, iTouch: **www.bit.ly/ifx-app**

Android, PC & Mac: **www.zinio.com/imaginefx**

Barnes & Noble Nook: **www.bit.ly/ifxnook**

nook by Barnes & Noble

Available on the App Store

zinio™

Storemags.com

Please note: DVD content isn't currently available with digital editions.

Subscribe today and receive a FREE copy of ArtRage Studio Pro worth £52/$80!



PLUS SAVE UP TO 40%**

Four great reasons to subscribe

- Receive a free copy of ArtRage3 Studio Pro!
- Have every issue delivered direct to your door or workplace every month
- Receive exclusive, word-free covers
- Stay up to date with all of the latest news, trends, techniques and digital art products



ArtRage3 Studio Pro convincingly blends and mixes traditional media. Oils in particular have a physical depth.

Prices* for 13 issues of ImagineFX

UK: £27.49 every six months by Direct Debit

UK: £54.49 a year

Europe: £76.99 a year

SAVE 30%*

Rest of the World: £87.99 a year

US and Canada:

$62.49 every six months by continuous credit card

$124.99 a year

SAVE 40%**



StoreMags

Get ArtRage3 free!



HURRY!
This is your last chance to get this brilliant offer
DON'T MISS OUT!

Subscribers only!
EXCLUSIVE WORD-FREE COVERS!

ImagineFX is packed with expert advice that'll help you to improve your art. Couple this with the easy-to-use **ArtRage**, which emulates natural painting techniques, and you'll soon be recreating traditional media like oil and watercolour on the digital canvas. **ImagineFX** and **ArtRage** – it's the perfect match!

Please note: a valid email address needs to be provided in order to receive the gift

UK, Europe and Rest of the World readers, please visit
www.myfavouritemagazines.co.uk/ifxp1b
or call **0844 848 2852** and quote **ifxp1b**

US and Canada readers, please visit
www.imsnews.com/imaginefx-a020
or call TOLL-FREE on **1-800 428 3003** and quote **a020**

HURRY! THIS OFFER ENDS 31 MAY 2012

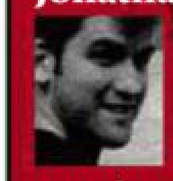
*Savings compared to buying 13 issues from UK newsstand. Details of the Direct Debit guarantee are available on request. **Savings compared to buying 13 issues from US newsstand at $15.99. Europe and the Rest of the World (RoW) have no set newsstand price, and therefore we can't advertise the specific savings you will make. UK, Europe and RoW subscribers will be charged in GB Pounds. US and Canada subscribers will be charged in US Dollars. The minimum subscription term is 12 months. You'll receive 13 issues of ImagineFX a year. Your subscription will start with the next available issue. If you're dissatisfied in any way over the next 60 days please notify us in writing and we will refund all unmailed items. We only have 250 copies of the ArtRage3 Studio Pro software. If stocks become exhausted we reserve the right to replace with an item of similar value. A valid email address must be provided to receive the gift. Instructions along with serial numbers will be emailed to you, enabling you to access the software along with free technical support. No boxed copies of the software will be sent to you. This gift is not available with digital edition subscriptions. Offer ends 31 May 2012.

Artist Q&A

GOT A QUESTION FOR OUR EXPERTS? LET US EASE YOUR ART-ACHE AT **HELP@IMAGINEFX.COM**

The ImagineFX panel

Jonathan Standing



Jonathan is an English artist and illustrator. He's based near Toronto, Canada, and works for a developer in the video games industry.

www.jonathanstanding.com

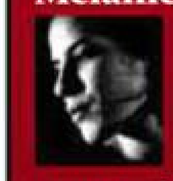
Cynthia Sheppard



Cynthia is a freelance digital artist. With a background in traditional painting, she likes to bring classical techniques to her work on digital canvas.

www.sheppard-arts.com

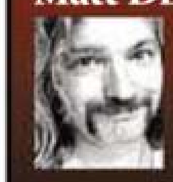
Mélanie Delon



Mélanie is a freelance fantasy illustrator. She works as a cover artist for several publishing houses, and on her personal artbook series.

www.melaniedelon.com

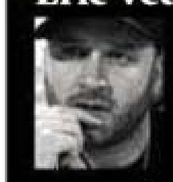
Matt Dixon



Matt first created artwork for a video game back in 1988, and has since worked for Blizzard. His pin-up art can be seen in his book Girls On Top.

www.mattdixon.co.uk

Eric Vedder



Eric has built a career working for the likes of Capcom. He works in the video game industry at Digital Extremes, and freelances on the side.

www.ericvedder.ca

Lauren K Cannon



Lauren is a freelance fantasy artist who specialises in the surreal. She lives in a small woodland village in New Jersey, US.

www.navate.com

Jon Hodgson



Jon trained as a fine artist, and is busy art directing an RPG based on The Lord of the Rings, to be published by Cubicle 7 Entertainment.

www.jonhodgson.com

Question

When using a set colour palette, how should I adjust those colours to unify the composition?

Liezl, South Africa



If you need to adjust the colours just use the filters in Photoshop, such as the Photo Filter. This can be helpful when you have to quickly correct a finished painting.

Answer

Mélanie replies



It's not particularly difficult to paint a scene with an almost monochromatic colour scheme The hardest part is to stick to the colours you've chosen, because the tendency is to add more colours to the character and the background as you go along.

So the best way to start is to choose a very simple colour scheme – one that's the same for both the background and the character – and then slowly construct the composition. You can add more colours to it as you proceed, but always in the same tone. I won't pick a red if my composition is mainly blue, for example.

Once the base of the composition is done, I add different elements and details. The trick here is to ignore the colour scheme. If my background is a pale blue then I'll choose a slightly darker blue for the fabric. In this way I stay within the same tones.

Of course, I still need to have my character visible. I don't want to lose it amongst the background, so the technique I use is to play with the light and the intensity of the colours. I usually add a very soft sort of halo of light or shadow (depending on my light source) behind the character. This further separates the character from the background. In addition, I increase the outer shape of the character using a slightly different colour on specific parts of the image.

Finally, I apply either the Photo Filter or the Color Balance Mask tool in Photoshop. The latter can come in especially handy when unifying colours once the painting is finished.

This is the base of my composition: you can see that there's no light or shadows, just the colour blocks. The colour scheme is very limited here, which forces me to stay within the same tones.

Store4gs.com

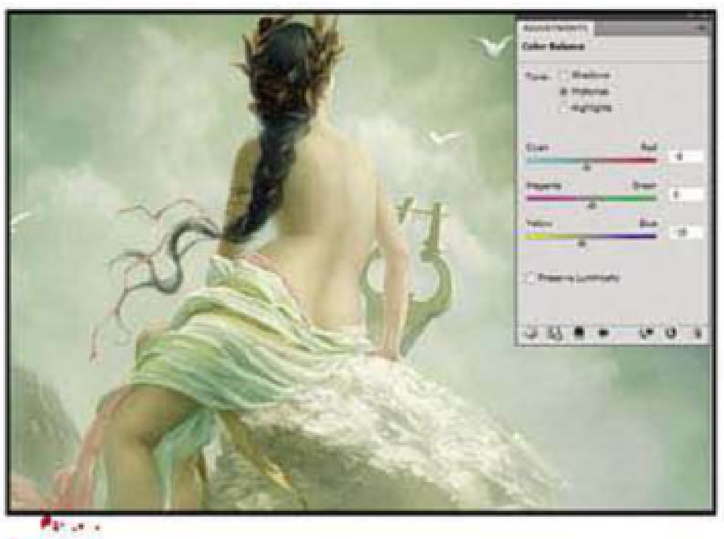
Step-by-step: Adjusting colours in a set palette



1 Overall the composition will be green and pastel-like, with little contrast. I choose only the basic colours that aren't too saturated, or dark/light. I need to have something almost neutral so that I can add more hues later. To produce harmonious colours I generally use the Color Picker and work with the RGB or CMYK tool.



2 I keep my basic colour scheme and re-use it on different elements. For example the fabric has the same tone as the sky, and I add some greenish yellow to the image (fabric, rock and sky), to bring some unity to the picture. The shadows and main light aren't strong enough, so I tweak their intensity accordingly.



3 I realise that the composition needs to pop, which will put the emphasis back onto the character. I duplicate the image and set it on a Soft Light layer at a very low Opacity. This gives more depth to the colours and makes different elements stand out. I use the Color Balance Mask to adjust and unify the colours.

Question
Is there a simple way to ensure that there's balance in my composition?
Lucy Hutton, England

Answer
Lauren replies



One of the core tenants of composition is the rule of thirds. This can run the risk of making your composition predictable, but it's a great place to start.

Imagine your canvas divided into three horizontal and vertical columns; placing focal elements on these lines usually makes for a much more balanced composition than if you place things dead centre or split the canvas in half.

In addition, watch out for dead space and tangents. Dead space is when there's a visual hole in your composition where no elements are present or visually leading into one another, or there's an area that's too plain compared to the rest of the image. Tangents happen when two edges or visual lines touch or intersect in an awkward way, for instance if the edge of a mountain runs directly into the line of a figure's shoulder. Pay attention to how all your elements touch and interact to avoid this; they unbalance a composition by pulling away from your intended focal point.

Use the background to your advantage, too. You can create subtle visual lines that lead the eye where you want it to go and also fill space.



Envision visual paths that lead to the focal point. Mapping these paths out with arrows is a great way to develop your eye for composition

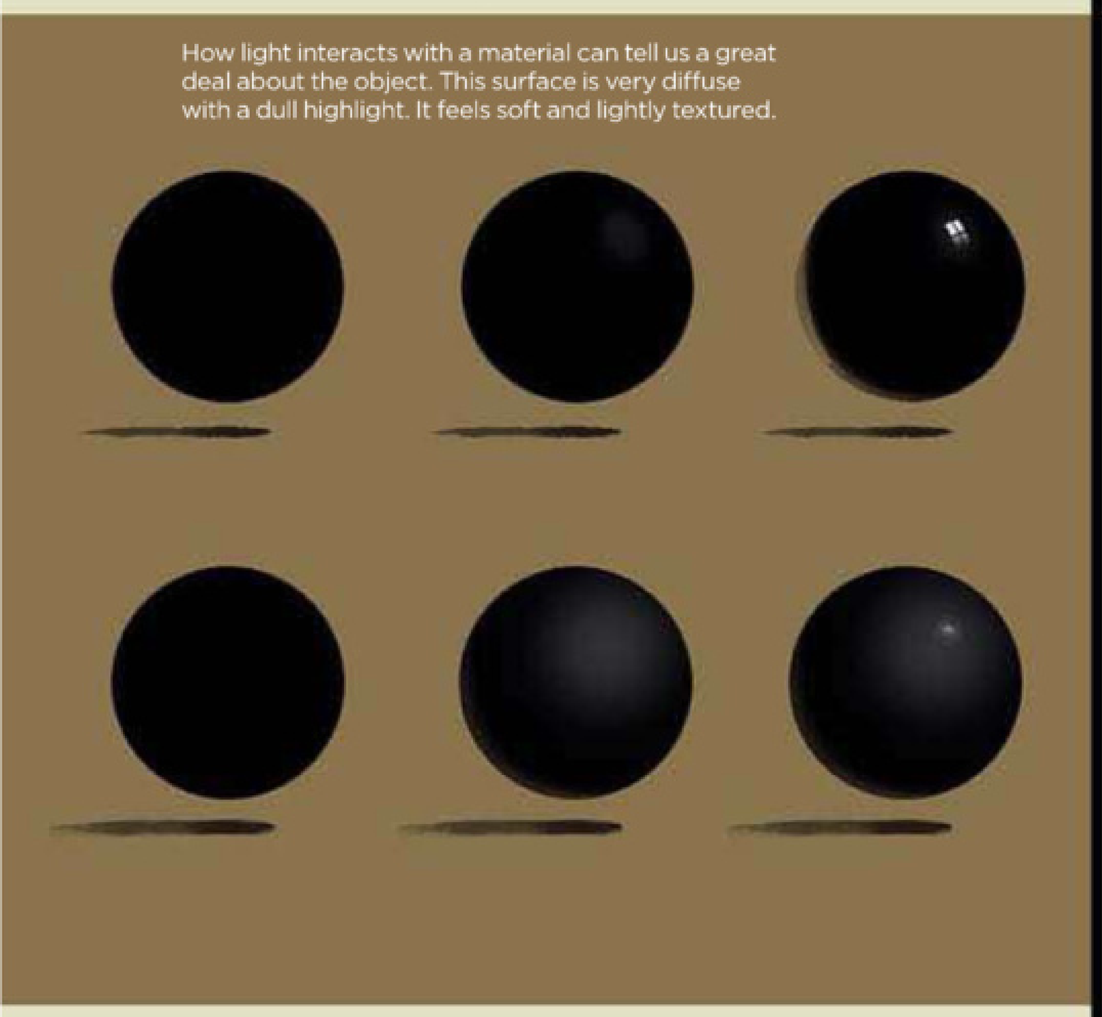
A balanced composition depends on many things working together and there isn't a cut-and-dry answer. Yet there are ways to avoid the most common problems.

Artist's secret

FIND AN EASY FIX

Rather than rearranging a painting, some compositional issues can be solved by adding elements in dead areas. In the image shown, the lower third was empty compared to the detailed background, so I added candles on the stairs to create balance.

Question
What's the easiest way to paint shiny rubber?
Justin Thomas, England



Answer
Matt replies



As with all surfaces, the painting process is easier if the material is broken down into logical stages. Material properties can be defined in terms of colour, specularity, reflectivity and other variables. Digital painters can approach surface rendering in the same way. Let's first look at a normal rubber surface, so we can see how a shiny surface might be different.

Imagine each property of the surface as a different layer of information. The first layer is the local colour, in this case black. Next is the diffuse layer, which describes how light scatters across the surface. Soft materials, such as rubber, are usually highly diffuse so we see a wide spread here, including light reflected from the background. Finally in this example comes the highlight, which can be thought of as a reflection of the light source. The soft surface rubber doesn't reflect strongly and so the highlight is dull and soft.

Now with a polished, shiny rubber, the local colour remains the same. Because the surface is much smoother, there's very little scattering of light and so the diffuse component is weaker and spreads over a smaller area. Smoother surfaces reflect very well, so the highlight is stronger and harder, and a distinct reflection of the light source may be evident in extreme cases. Note that the background is also reflected much more strongly.

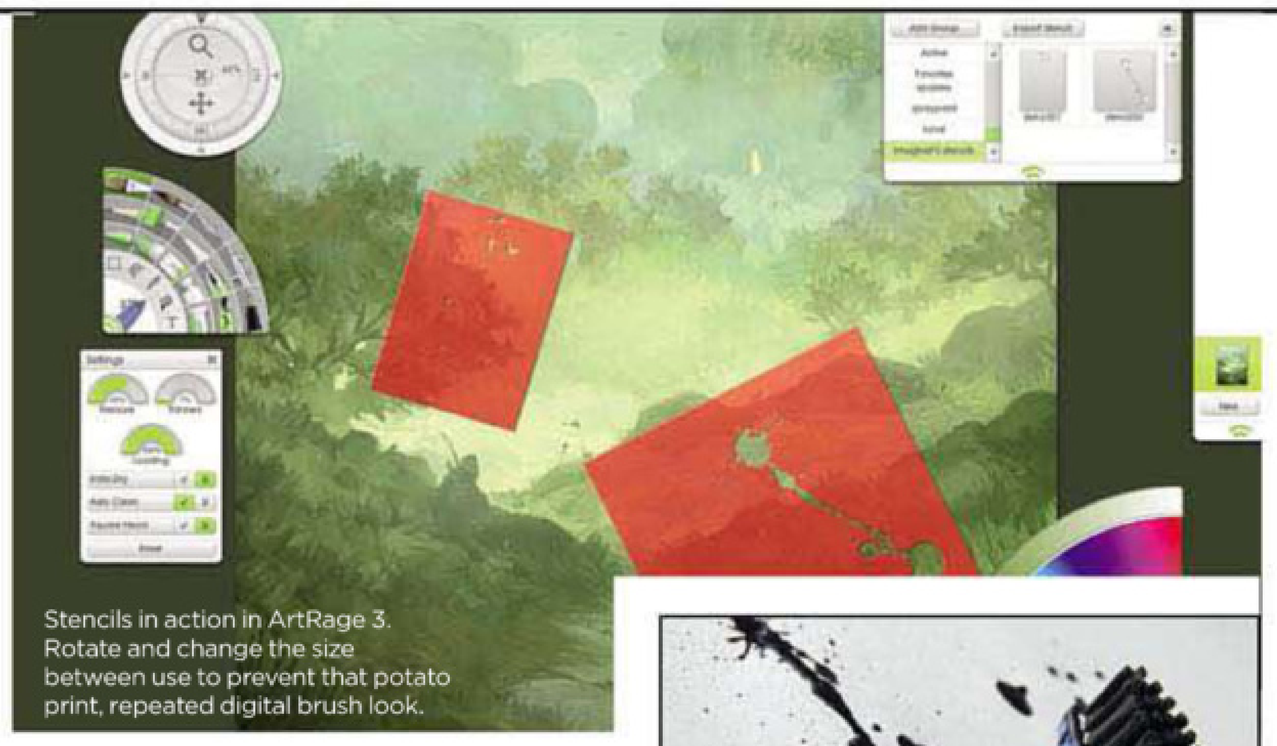
You should now be able to build shiny rubber on more complicated shapes using the same layered approach.

Artist's secret

KEEP IT SIMPLE

Building a surface in simple layers on a primitive shape is a great way to familiarise yourself with a new material and to develop a considered approach to rendering. Save your experiments to use as reference – it should be a simple task to apply what you've learned to more complex shapes using the same techniques.

Question
How can I create realistic paint splatters in programs such as ArtRage?
Jacob Malewski, US



Stencils in action in ArtRage 3. Rotate and change the size between use to prevent that potato print, repeated digital brush look.

Answer
Jon replies



The best way to get real media splatters into your work is by employing some traditional media. You can make splatters with Stickers in ArtRage, and custom brushes in Painter and Photoshop. Those are well covered in the appropriate manuals. However, I'll focus on a slightly different technique in ArtRage 3 that I use a lot, and which I think produces some nice results.

First we need some real paint and I recommend acrylics or ink. We'll also need a toothbrush. Use some fine-toothed paper. Simply dip your toothbrush and fire some paint onto the paper. Do lots of these, and experimenting with different splashes and splatters. Try to keep each splatter reasonably separate. Now scan them in to your computer.



Focus on highly directional sprays, small and big droplets, runs, drips... the whole range of possible marks to maximise your time spent.

Set up a new painting in ArtRage and under View click Stencil Collection. In the Stencils pane click Add New Collection, create a splatters collection and click Important Stencil to load the first splatter image. Repeat for all your splatter files.

Clicking the new stencils will place them on your image. Experiment with different materials on different kinds of layers to see which produces your preferred look.

Question
How do I paint fabric that looks realistic as it blows in the wind?
Mark Powell, England

Answer
Cynthia replies



There are numerous occasions on which you can show fabric blowing in the wind. I've picked a ship's sails, but the technique is the same: first describe the structure around which the fabric is being blown.

There are many types of wind-powered vessels, but most rectangular sails follow the same construction and rules for attachment to the ship. By building the bones of my ship first, it becomes easier to see where the sails attach to the rigging. The bones include the ship's body, masts and cross beams (or spars) that support and manipulate the sails. Each rectangular sail is attached by its corners to the horizontal spars above and below it with ropes, allowing the middle of the sails to puff out and create the classic billowed sail shape.

If you've taken art classes you've probably been asked to do a shaded drawing of a white sphere, to learn how light hits round objects. Really billowy sails on a bright day follow the same rules as a matte sphere. Each sail will have a bright hot area where the sun hits, then a stripe of shadow where the light terminates, and a bit of reflected light from the surface of the sea.

StoreMags

Your questions answered...

Question
What's the best method of painting lightning and electricity effects?

Mark Joseph Kilkelly, Ireland



Branching out: lightning effects do tend to resemble a tree shape to some extent – they can also look like veins.

Answer
Eric replies



Introducing these type of visual effects into paintings is some of my favourite stuff to paint. Not only can you highlight and direct the viewer's eye with it, but it can also give your images life.

First and foremost however, is grabbing decent reference for your images. I can't stress this stage enough. Take 10 minutes to surf the internet and you'll come across all kinds of great images. Two great reasons to grab references, at least in my book, is that not only will your art look more realistic, but the references can inspire you even more with your art.

Lightning or electrical effects resemble a tree branch to some degree. One main branch of light with smaller and smaller off-shoots going every which way – similar to the veins in our own bodies.

Using Photoshop, I fill in the background with a dark blue. On a new layer I use a very light purple/blue to draw one main thick branch of light, using the Hard Round brush. Then with a thinner line (using the same brush) I begin making sporadic smaller branches. Copying and pasting my lightning layer, I use Gaussian Blur to give it an even, all-round glow. On the bottom layer, I draw a large, slightly purple, glow behind everything using the Soft Round Pressure Opacity brush. After getting something I like, I finish up by adding a few small white hotspots (using the same brush) here and there, to add variety of intensity and in an effort to draw the viewer's eye in.

Artist's secret



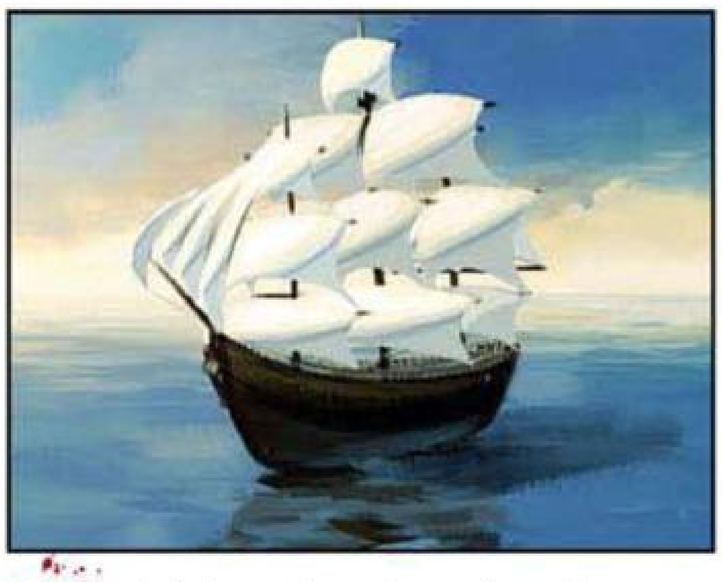
DRAWING WITH SHIFT

A great tip for getting sporadic lines is to hold down shift while tapping your Wacom tablet randomly with your pen and using the Hard Round brush. This gives your lines a randomness that can be useful for making those lightning branches.

Step-by-step: Painting a ship's billowing sails



1 I construct the bones of my ship using the horizon line to determine the perspective of the ship's body and cross beams. Many traditional sailing ships have three masts, but depending on the size of the vessel we can add more, or just have a single mast.

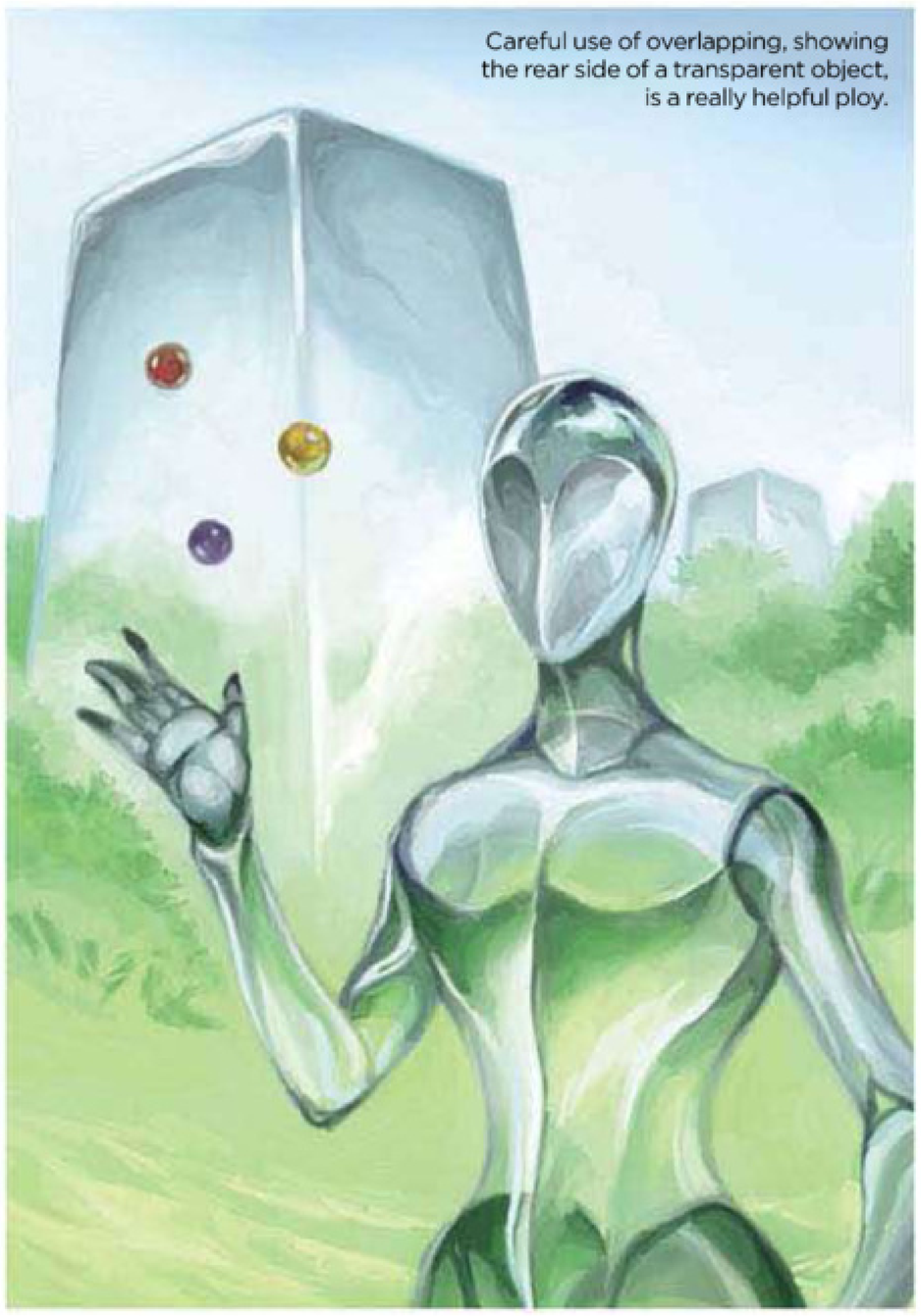


2 Next I plan where the sails go by placing the top corners on a higher beam, and the bottom corners on the next beam below it. Once the corners are plotted, I draw each side of the rectangular sail as a curved line, each line bowing toward the front of the ship.



3 Shadows and reflected light are added as per the sphere principles, then I apply cast shadows to each sail, depending on what's between them and the light. I finish off with guy lines from the top of the masts and other cordage that runs between the beams and the deck.

Question
How do I paint buildings, trees and people made of glass?
Gülümhan 'Roselyn' Eraslan, Turkey



Careful use of overlapping, showing the rear side of a transparent object, is a really helpful ploy.

Answer
Jon replies



Making convincing glass structures is all about understanding materials and how they interact with light. A material will reflect a certain amount of light, and allow a certain amount of light to pass through it.

Take reflections: on dull, rough surfaces we don't see much reflection because it's a dull, diffuse kind of bouncing light. On highly polished and reflective surfaces we see more focused light bouncing right off, showing a very clear reflection. So we need to know what's surrounding a glass structure, and make sure that we show it reflected. It's well worth taking the time to make some studies of how light reflects from glass objects. Bottles, vases, paperweights can all provide vital visual information to feed into your work. Once you grasp the underlying principles, you can do so much more.

When it comes to transparency there's a couple of factors to consider. Completely clear glass will make for very complex images, because we can see right through it, with only the reflections to give us an idea of the shape. Slightly more translucent materials offer some lovely opportunities to show diffuse coloured blooms of light. Furthermore, the nature of the material will affect how light passes through it. Coarse glass has ripples and bubbles we can use to our advantage in building solidity to the form. High-tech glass is completely clear, without imperfections to impede light.

Finally, keep in mind that the colour of the glass is important because it'll tint all light passing through, and will affect some of the reflections.



Drawing from life is vital; to understand the structure of what you're trying to paint.

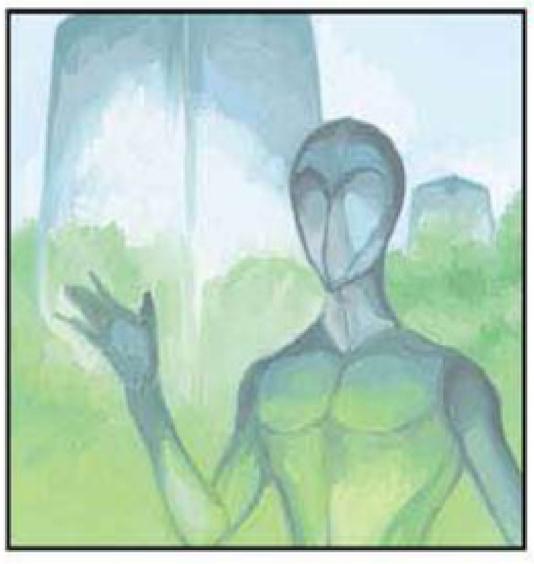
Step-by-step: Painting transparencies



1 At the sketch stage it's most important to consider lighting and composition. You need meaningful overlaps to show that materials are transparent, but you don't want to make the image too confusing. We need to consider where light will fall to show off the reflectiveness of the glass, where it will come through the glass, and what can be seen through it.



2 Over the top of the sketch, I add the basic colours on a Multiply layer. I've used green and blue here, just for the sake of simplicity, but choosing something more adventurous would really add to the overall image. From my studies of real glass, I know I need to make the glass buildings and the figure slightly darker and greyer, which gives me a good starting base to work on.



3 Now this is where artist discipline comes in. Reflections sit on top of everything else, especially hard specular highlights. So I'm careful to get all the mid-tones and darks in place, without giving in to the temptation to start to render the forms with highlights. If you give in to temptation and do this too early, you'll create a solid, rather than transparent, feel.



4 Next up, the highlights go in. A mix of hard-edged sharp highlights, others with one hard edge and a softer vanishing edge can be seen in the reference, so I make sure I use those. Getting the shadows deep enough is another a key part of this stage. Rather than lying underneath the forms, the shadows tend to fall at the top of glass objects.

Question
What's the best way to paint armour that looks exotic and glows?
James Peck, England



A glow effect will always be most effective when presented in an area of high contrast, as against the black background here.

Omit dark shadows and paint over a bright base tone to give armour a sense of luminosity.

Answer
Matt replies



Try and visualise the effect you want first and find the easiest route to that result. I would split this task into two separate stages: the armour and the glow effect.

Before painting, consider the properties of a glowing material. An object that emits light will present very little in the way of shadow and any luminescence will reduce the strength of any highlights. How far to take this depends on the power of the glow you want, but starting with a bright base colour is a good way to avoid heavy shadow. Ensure that you keep sufficient contrast to describe the form of the object effectively.

For the glow effect, begin by adding a simple haze around the armour. This will give the impression of light emitting from the surface. This can easily be done by roughly filling the armour shape on a new layer and applying a blur filter – choose a colour that'll contrast with the background, but don't overstate the effect. Add intensity with the Overlay blend mode, using a large Soft-edged brush to gently touch in brighter tones. Select a saturated colour to pull out extra colour. Finally, add some small particles on a separate layer: this will give the armour a magical flavour and add further interest to the effect.

Artist's secret



THINK IN THREE DIMENSIONS!

Notice how the particles in the glow effect pass in front of the armour as well as around the sides. This may be a small detail, but it goes a long way to make the effect convincing and sell the idea of the armour occupying three-dimensional space.

Question
How do I paint a heavy mist falling over rocks and through trees?
Tully Sullivan, US

Answer
Cynthia replies



The trick to getting a misty look is to obscure large parts of the objects with a light colour and use sharp edges sparingly. You'll want to leave the closest objects (or furthest from the fog) sharper, and blend the rest very softly. In the case of rocks engulfed by mist at the base of a waterfall, we wouldn't see where the rocks meet the ground.

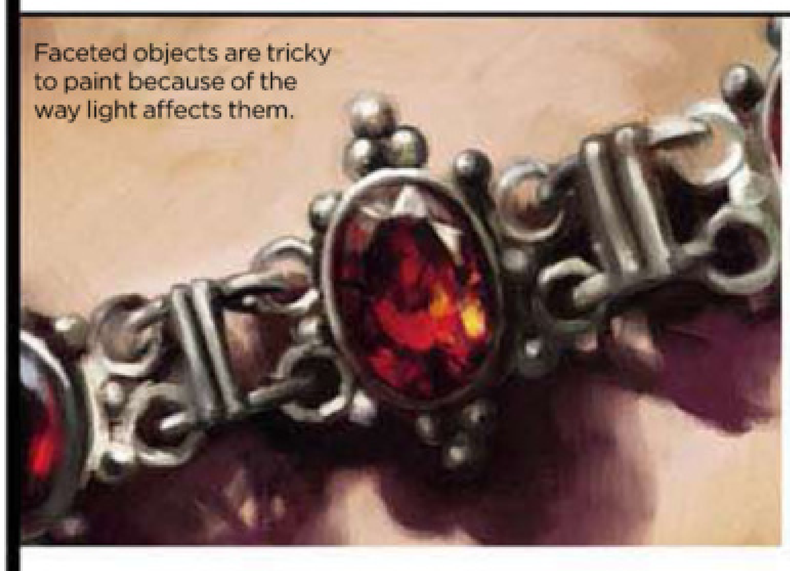
You'll probably want to use cool or neutral colours in your scene, because mist makes an environment more overcast and the tiny droplets pick up greys/blues from the sky. When it comes to light and value over a foggy forest, the rules of atmospheric perspective dictate that objects further away should become lighter and more neutral in hue. This is more exaggerated with dense fog, pushing the shift towards lighter values much closer to the viewer.



Rocks stick out above mist created at the bottom of a waterfall. Only the top edges are clear, the rest obscured.

A forest covered in dense fog will have trees that become more distinct the closer they are.

Question
How do I keep light consistent in a complex object such as a diamond?
Dale Martin, Canada



Faceted objects are tricky to paint because of the way light affects them.



Focus on the outside facets to establish lighting direction, then add refracted light inside.

Answer
Lauren replies

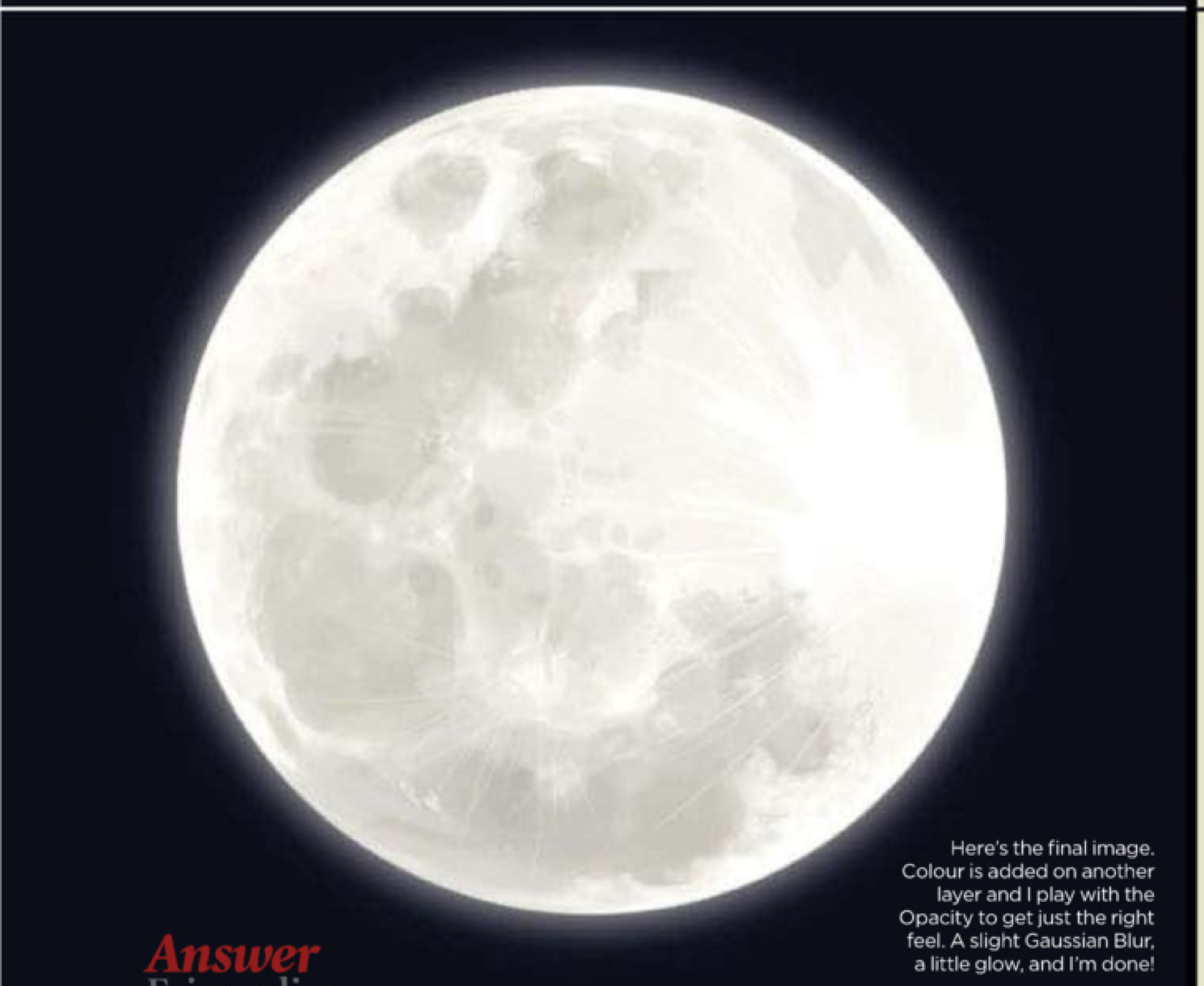


When painting jewels you deal not only with the lighting on the outer surface, but also how the light refracts inside the object. In a cut gem like a diamond, reproducing a realistic glitter and shine can be challenging to do from imagination. You run the risk of either oversimplifying the lighting, or making the lighting inconsistent and messy.

If you're not able to get a hold of strong reference material, there are some tricks you can use to create consistent, realistic lighting in complex or refracting objects.

Establishing the lighting on the surface gives a strong anchoring point for the light. Add the inside lighting detail afterwards: the brightest colour spot will occur across from the brightest outside highlight and work from there.

Question
Do you have any tips on painting a realistic full moon in Photoshop CS3?
Juriya Shoh, Scotland



Here's the final image. Colour is added on another layer and I play with the Opacity to get just the right feel. A slight Gaussian Blur, a little glow, and I'm done!

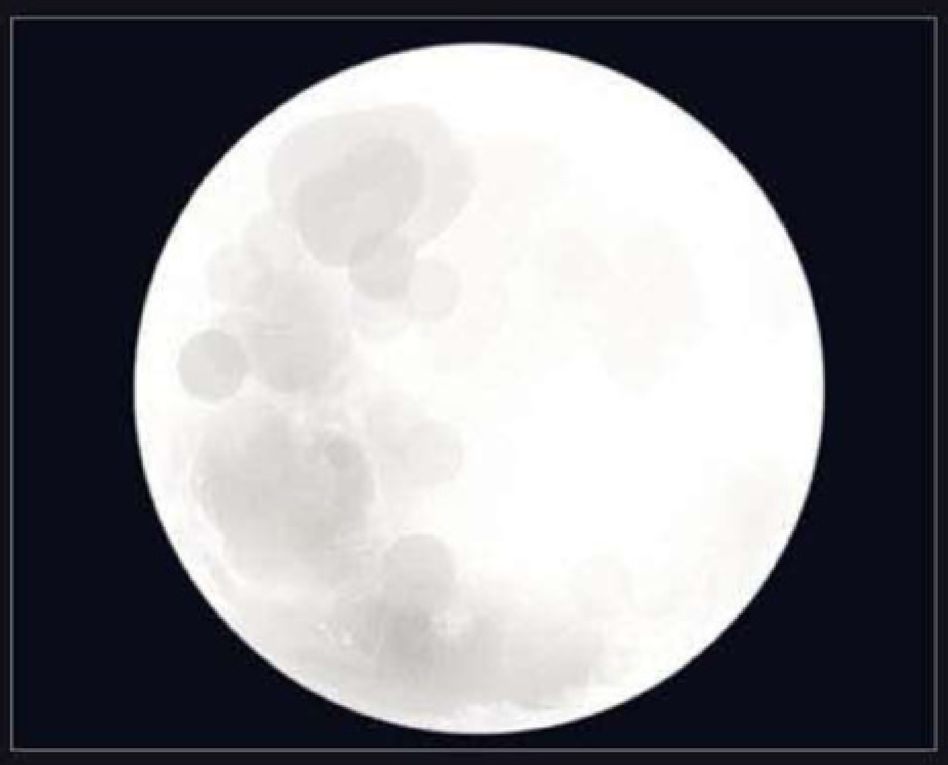
Answer
Eric replies



It's been a while since using Photoshop CS3, but luckily all the same default brushes are still included in the latest version of the program. In addition, I don't tend to stray too far away from the default brushes unless I need to achieve a very specific mood on a layer, to give my paintings punch.

In fact, whether using CS3 or a newer version of Photoshop, the basics remain the same when painting something like a full moon. First, I always stress the use of reference for all things. After grabbing online references of different moons, I have a general idea of what I want to achieve from the image. I usually think about colour first, but I don't apply any until the end. There are much more important things to figure out before colour can be applied, such as shape and composition.

Because it's a moon, the colour and shape is pretty straightforward (full, half or quarter) so pick one that feels best in your composition. Using a Hard Round brush, I make my shape. I use the Hard Round Pressure Opacity brush to give the moon some crater details of varying degrees and sizes. I finish up with a slight glow around it, using an Overlay layer, varying the intensity depending on the composition or purpose of my painting.



Here I've created my shape using the Hard Round brush against a dark background. I start adding some craters using the Hard Round Opacity brush.

Question
Can you help me paint stylised, coloured bubbles?
Luisa Rafidi, Brazil



The finished bubbles look a bit sketchy, but I don't need to refine them much more. You can blur them slightly if you don't want visible brush strokes.

Answer
Mélanie replies



Painting bubbles is a straightforward process. Even painting coloured bubbles is simple, because it's just a matter of understanding light.

The main goal here is to work the volume of the bubbles, and all we have to do is to play with the light. I start with the shape, I choose a coloured round base painted in a mid-tone. I don't need to draw perfect circles for my bubbles: the more variety the shapes have, the more natural the finished bubbles will look.

Once the shape is defined I add the light, keeping in mind where the light source is. I want it to come from the top, so I add a huge dot of light above my bubbles with a very pale colour (almost white). To make the light pop out and bring more depth and volume to the bubbles, I add some shadows, just below the main light.

Finally, I add some very bright and saturated colour to the bottom of the bubble. This adds to the effect of transparency without having to make the bubble clear.



Here is the base of the bubbles: a round colour block, and the colours for the blue one. I use the same kind of colour scheme for the other bubbles.

StoreMags



Next month

ON SALE: **27 April**

Paint the translucent effect of holograms

Question

My skeletal warriors look too frail! How can I beef them up?

Barry O'Driscoll, Ireland

Answer

Jonathan replies



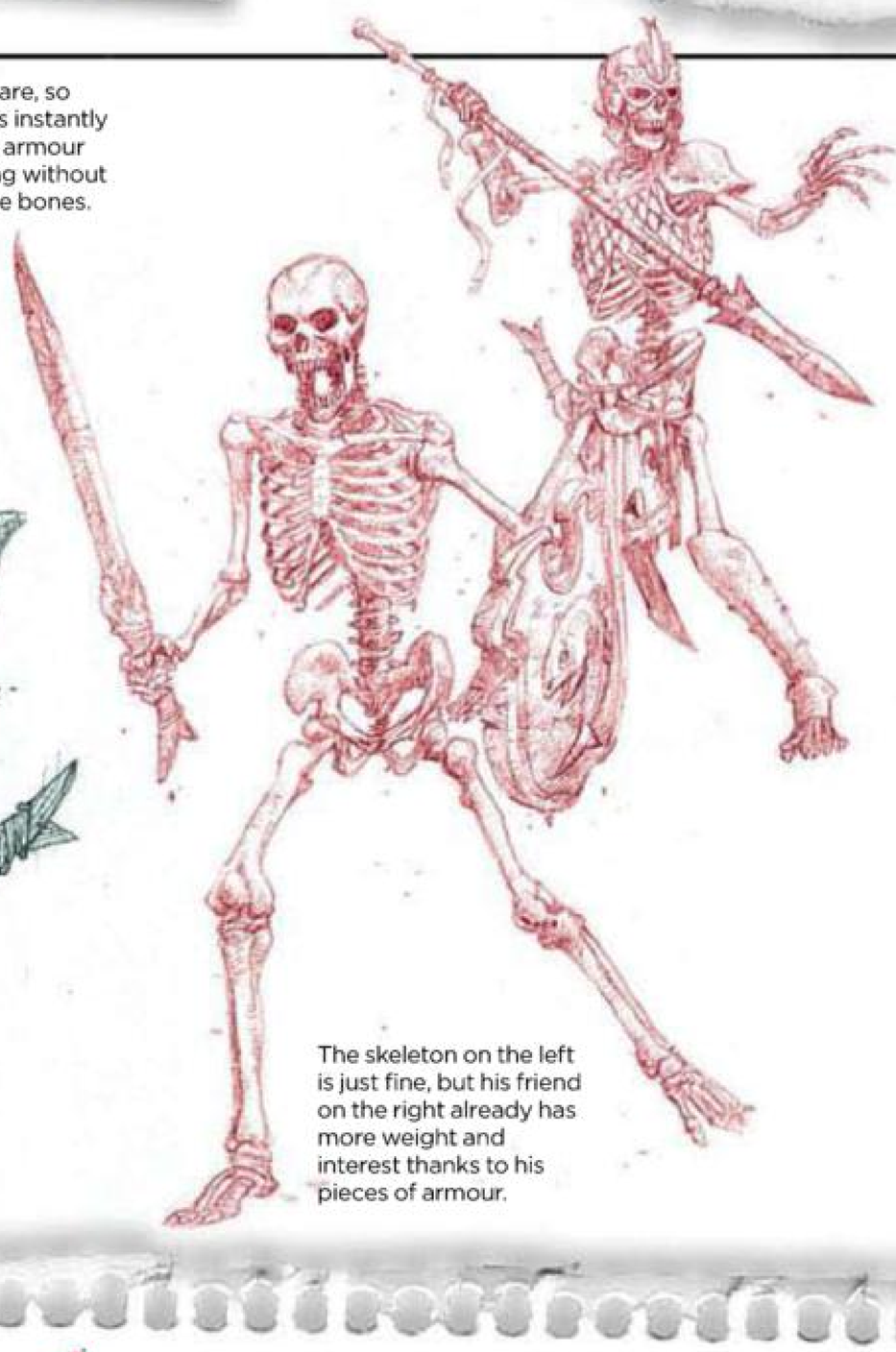
The simple technique to use here is one of stylisation. Skeletons can look a bit weedy if you stick strictly to realistic proportions, especially when stacked up against large or muscular characters. The shoulders look a bit narrow, while the hands and feet, without flesh, seem a bit small. However, simply by enlarging the hands and feet, shrinking the head and broadening the shoulders a tiny bit, your skeletons should soon look more physical.

Without adding any rotting flesh (which I suppose would make them zombies or ghouls anyway), armour and ragged clothing are also great ways to add information to a skeleton's silhouette and give it weight. As long as the clothing looks old and timeworn, it can be a great way to hint at the skeleton's former life, or help you hide some of the skeleton underneath (if you need to). If you're putting several skeletons in your scene, this will help you save time and give the viewer a way to visually distinguish them from each other.

Another great technique is to give the bones some nice curvature to them. It's a mistake to draw or paint them as straight tubes, because bones naturally have curvature and variations in thickness and texture. If you take advantage of this and play it up, then you can really add some heft and energy to your skeletons.



I've left the skull bare, so that the skeleton is instantly recognisable. The armour adds some layering without obscuring all of the bones.



The skeleton on the left is just fine, but his friend on the right already has more weight and interest thanks to his pieces of armour.

Artist's secret



FUDGING THE DETAILS

It's good to familiarise yourself with the human skeleton to the point that you can draw it from memory. Even if the anatomy wouldn't be up to scratch for a textbook, I've made it realistic enough that it feels convincing.

Step-by-step: Put some meat on the bones



1 There's nothing really wrong with the anatomy in this image. It's more or less correct, but the bones are so straight and boring that they don't feel real or have any volume to them. The uniformity of thickness also tends to make the bones look shorter than they really are, because it makes it harder for you to show that they take up space.



2 Adding some curvature to the thighbone has given a ton of energy to this leg and it feels primed for movement compared to the previous version. The variety of thickness and texture helps to accentuate this and articulate the three-dimensional shape to the viewer. I enlarged the foot ever so slightly too, which helps it feel more grounded.



3 Finally, adding a greave (shin armour) to the leg has naturally obscured some of the bones, but has added visual interest in spades. With the thigh and foot being exposed, the viewer's mind can fill in what's behind the armour plate, and we get a nice change of both shape and texture that brings variety to the image.

Got a digital art problem? Is an image giving you art-ache? Our panel can help. Email your question to our experts at **help@imaginefx.com** or write to **Artist Q&A, ImagineFX, 30 Monmouth St, Bath, BA1 2BW, UK.**

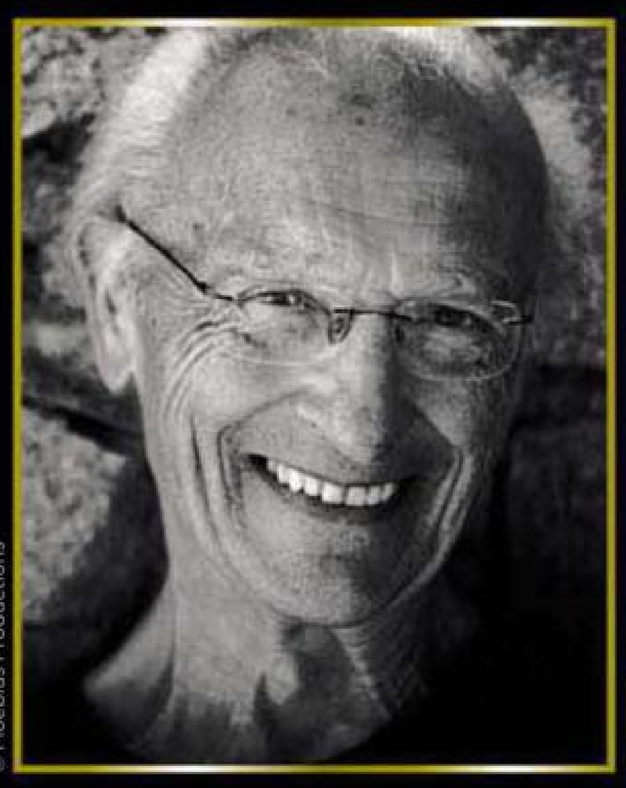
© Moebius Productions
Storemags

Jean always carried a sketchbook with him and would scribble ideas down almost subconsciously as he walked, to later refine as finished artwork.



Jean 'Moebius' Giraud A Tribute 1938 – 2012

A visionary genius, rebel and artist who refused to stand still – Jean Giraud created some of fantasy art's most iconic imagery



© Moebius Productions

Known as the man with three names, the man of many faces and, controversially for some, the Pope of comics, Moebius changed an industry at a time when it needed changing. As Moebius, Gir or under his real name Jean Giraud, this French illustrator became a beacon to artists around the world searching for brave new ideas.

Jean Giraud died 10 March, aged 73. His 50-year career in comics, film and fine art leaves behind an astonishing creative legacy.

"France has lost one of its best-known artists in the world. In Japan, Italy, in the US, he is an incredible star who influenced world comics," commented Benoit Mouchart, artistic director at France's Angouleme International Comics Festival. "Moebius will remain part of the history of drawing, in the same right as Dürer or Ingres. He was an incredible producer. He said he wanted to show what eyes do not always see."

French culture minister Frederic Mitterrand made a statement on art's loss, saying that by the simultaneous death of Jean Giraud and Moebius, France had lost "two great artists".

FORMATIVE YEARS

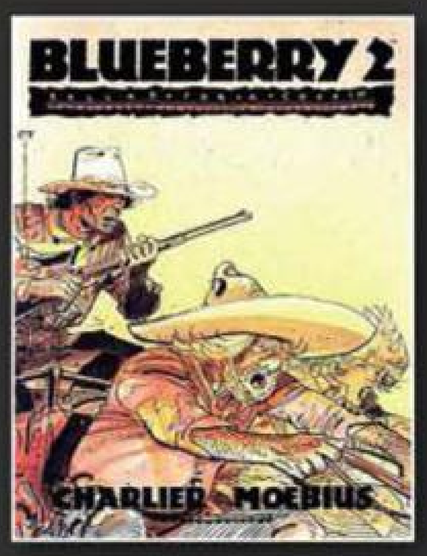
Growing up in the Nogent-sur-Marne suburb of Paris, Jean was often left alone to fend for himself as his mother went to work. In this solitude, drawing became his companion and once he'd attended art

Devoid of dialogue, Arzach changed people's perception of how a comic should look and read.

© Moebius Productions

COMIC PIONEER

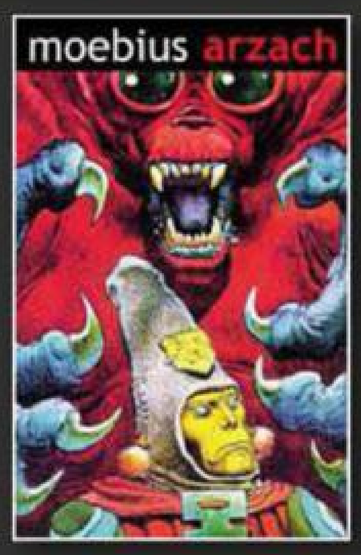
The comics that elevated Jean to greatness...



BLUEBERRY

1963

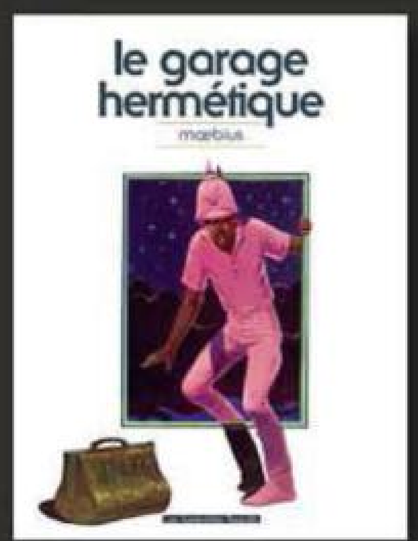
Working in the French tradition of bandes dessinées (which can be translated as drawn strips), under the name Gir, Jean co-created the character of Blueberry. This Western comic was brutal and honest, pitching its anti-hero on a redemptive journey across American wastelands. Later issues would become more experimental as Jean became frustrated by the confines of the genre.



ARZACH

1974-2010

Featuring no dialogue, speech bubbles or descriptive panels, Arzach set a new standard for visual narrative design and turned the comics industry on its head. The series follows the Arzach, who rides a pterodactyl-like creature across a surreal alien landscape influenced by Jean's early life in Mexico. He once said he would shake in a kind of ecstasy while he drew this strip.



LE GARAGE HERMETIQUE

1976-80

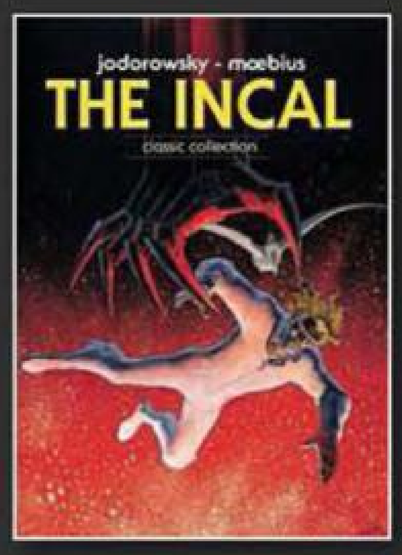
Known as The Airtight Garage in its English translation and written as a stream of consciousness, Le Garage Hermétique follows the struggle of Major Grubert to protect the developing worlds inside a hollow asteroid from the invasion of several other people – one being English author Michael Moorcock's character Jerry Cornelius.



THE LONG TOMORROW

1977

While working on production designs for Dune in 1975 with Dan O'Bannon, the pair created this comic. Originally written and drawn by Dan, Jean redrew the pages to create a noir parody set in the future, which would inspire both Ridley Scott's Blade Runner and George Lucas's The Empire Strikes Back. The strip was serialised in Métal Hurlant in 1977.



L'INCAL

1981-89

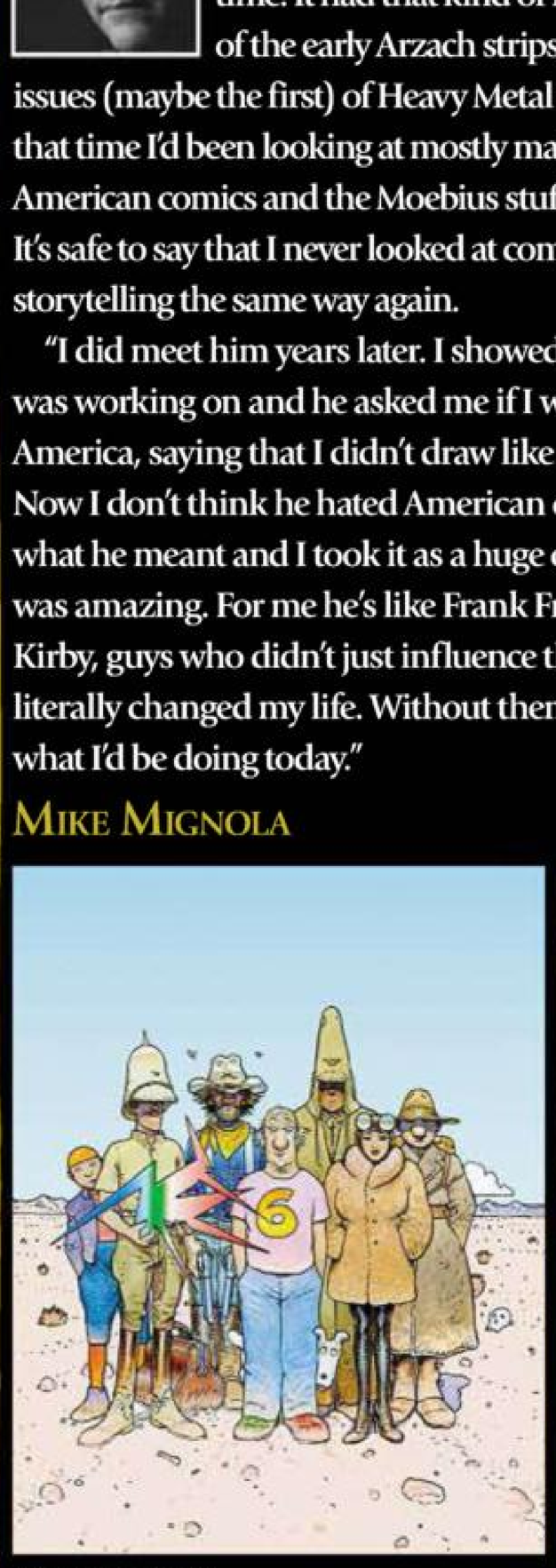
Jean's most successful and long-running collaboration was with Alejandro Jodorowsky, whom he first met while working on Dune. The series is based on Tarot cards, with the main character of John Difool being The Fool who must overcome his internal struggles to save the universe. The books mix space opera, metaphysics and satire to present a complete fictional universe. L'Incal is viewed as a direct inspiration for Luc Besson's The Fifth Element.



"I still remember exactly where I was sitting when I discovered Moebius for the first time. It had that kind of impact. It was one of the early Arzach strips in one of the early issues (maybe the first) of Heavy Metal magazine. Up to that time I'd been looking at mostly mainstream American comics and the Moebius stuff was a revelation. It's safe to say that I never looked at comic book storytelling the same way again.

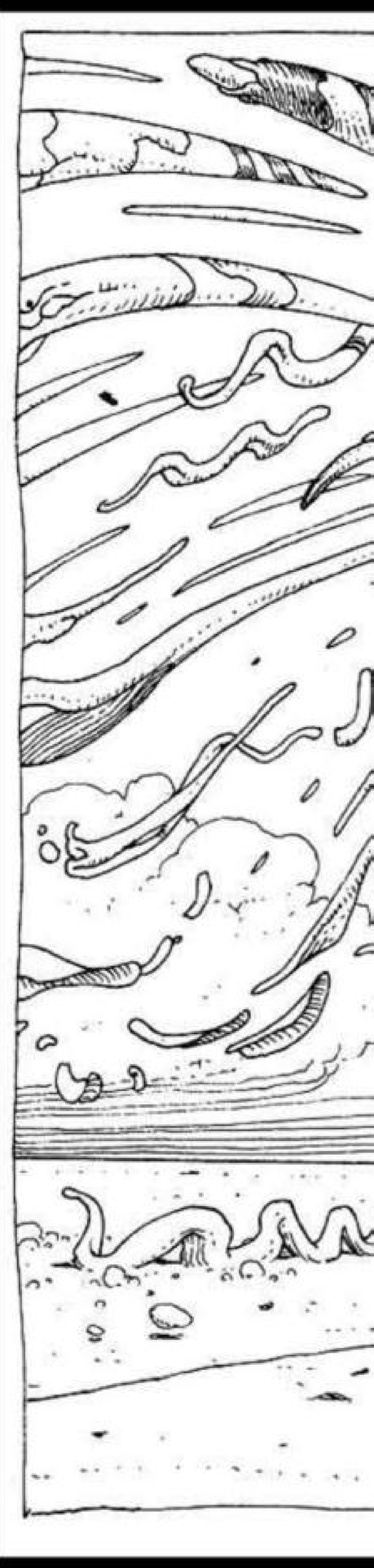
"I did meet him years later. I showed him some pages I was working on and he asked me if I was trained in America, saying that I didn't draw like an American. Now I don't think he hated American comics, but I knew what he meant and I took it as a huge compliment. He was amazing. For me he's like Frank Frazetta and Jack Kirby, guys who didn't just influence the way I draw, but literally changed my life. Without them I have no idea what I'd be doing today."

MIKE MIGNOLA



During the last years of his life Jean worked almost exclusively under the name Moebius, and often digitally.

© Moebius Productions



The desert theme reappears many times in Jean's art, inspired by his time spent in Mexico.

school, his career was set. However, his education was interrupted when his family moved to Mexico, and his time spent wandering the barren deserts would affect everything he would later work on.

Jean sold his first piece, a series of children's comic strips, at the age of 15. This brought him to the attention of Jean-Michel Charlier, who hired him to create an adult strip for Pilote. Drawing on his experiences in Mexico and working under the pen name Gir, the artist created his iconic, raw and animalistic Western strip Blueberry.

> "The idea was to be free, with no boundaries. I wanted to be provocative"
>
> JEAN 'MOEBIUS' GIRAUD

It wasn't enough though. Pilote and Blueberry was too safe. Jean would subsequently describe feeling like a "masked man", a "subversive influence" inside a mainstream comic studio. His mind was full of "science fiction, surrealism and sexuality" and needed an outlet. "Moebius was a way of exploring the unconscious, the world of dreams," Jean would later explain. As Gir became his persona for realistic, gritty tales of heroism, Moebius was his experimental self.

WEIGHTY MATERIAL

Life at Pilote imploded and with Philippe Druillet he launched Métal Hurlant to showcase new, imaginative work as the art group Les Humanoides Associes. During this period Jean – as Moebius – created La Deviation, Le Bandard Fou, Arzach and Le Garage Hermétique. These comics represent the artist's greatest body of work, a moment when he was perfectly in sync with culture of the time.

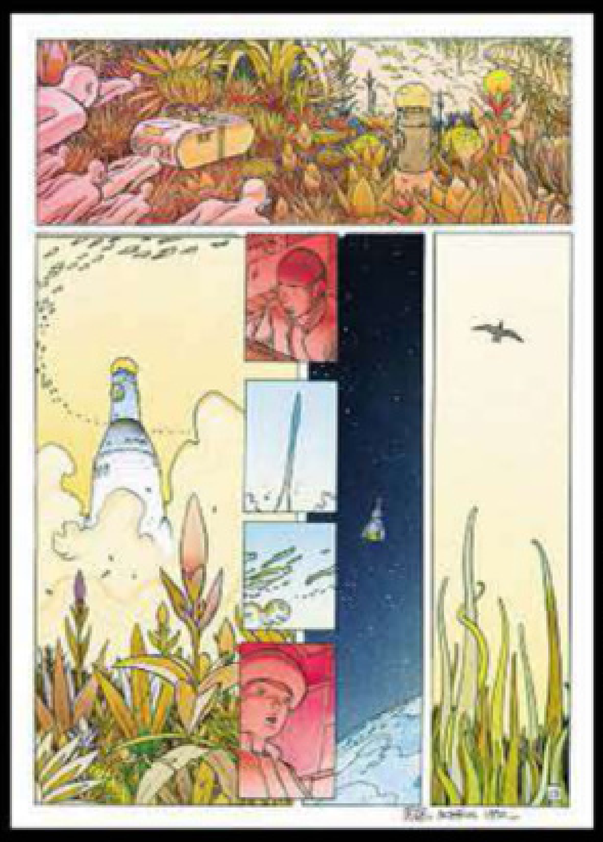




"I feel grief. Moebius/Jean Giraud/Gir has left us, and a lot of illustrators are orphans today – and not only in France. He was, is and will always be one of the greatest illustrators of all time."

SERGE BIRAULT

© Moebius Productions



"The challenge is to put the viewer in the picture," said Jean last year. "To make them believe it."

© Casterman/Moebius Productions

"The idea was to be free, completely free, with no boundaries," recalled Jean in our interview from issue 65. "I wanted to be provocative."

In the case of Arzach, it changed everything for the artist, and for comics in general. The strip created a new visual language for comics. Non-linear, expressive and surreal, Arzach demanded that the reader form the broader narrative of this new world. As Moebius the artist moved toward a dark and enigmatic lyricism that would set the pace for years to come. "It was the first time a book had no dialogue and it was intentionally provocative," said Jean in our last interview with the artist.

Such strong visual design wasn't going unnoticed. George Lucas, who Jean once described as an "enlightened amateur", used Arzach as inspiration for Star Wars. While in 1975 filmmaker Alejandro Jodorowsky hired Jean, along with HR Giger, Chris Foss and Dan O'Bannon,



Jean was a restless artist and adapted digital art into his process, beginning with a Commodore Amiga 500.

© Moebius Productions



"I first saw his Arzach comic strip in 1974 in the pages of Métal Hurlant. I was visiting New York at the time and a friend handed me the magazine. There was a curious grin on my friend's face, as if he were daring me to open its pages. When I did I felt my entire aesthetic world-view shift on its axis. I thought, 'You can do this? In comics?' After so many years of reading Jack Kirby, Al Williamson, Frank Frazetta, Wally Wood, Bernie Wrightson and Michael Kaluta, I thought that I knew the limits of what you could do in the comics medium. But here was something entirely new, something extraordinary. It was as if Moebius had simply split wide his head to let me see what mad, visionary images were racing, full tilt through it. A world that was a sublime distillation of all the tropes of sci-fi and fantasy prose, mainstream comics and comic strips, and the raw personal of underground comic. A unique mix for sure. And my world has never been the same since.

"Over the years I'd met him a few times and heard sublime, as well as hilarious, stories about him from close friends. The last time I saw Jean was in Paris, two years ago, a chance meeting at a small café. He was warm and welcoming, his delight in life still burned in his eyes.

"There are very few artists whose influence vaults off their drawing board and beyond their published work. He's one of those select few. Anyone today that works in the sci-fi and fantasy field, whether it's painting covers or designing films or video games, has touched his visionary aesthetic and come away the better for it."

CHARLES VESS

The character of Blueberry was based on the look of French 1960s actor Jean-Paul Belmondo.

© Dargaud/Charlier/Giraud

JEAN 'MOEBIUS' GIRAUD

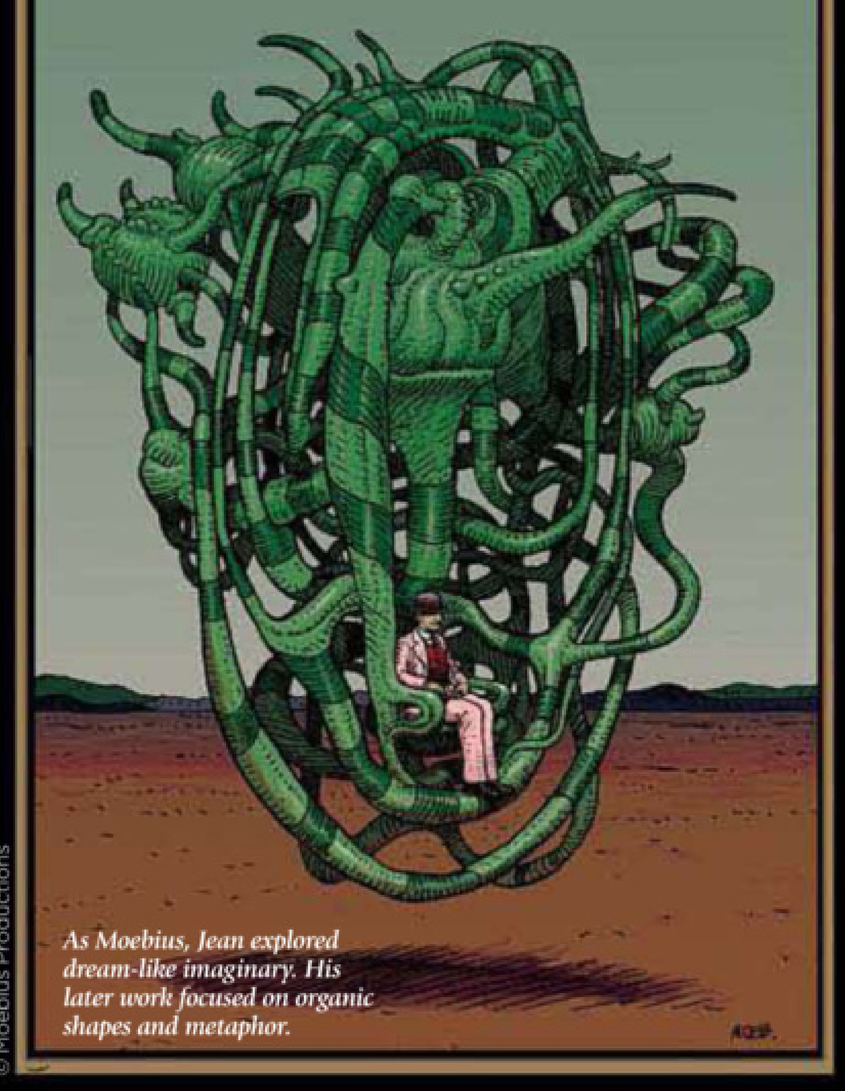
A Tribute 1938 – 2012



"Moebius changed my life. He was – and is – my biggest artistic inspiration both in style and thematically. His work is full of wonder, energy, elegance, whimsy… every time I look at it I discover something new, and as my own ability grows so does my appreciation for different aspects of his work.

"I met him once, through our mutual friend, Geof Darrow, and it was a fulfilment of a childhood dream. He was gracious and funny. I was in awe.

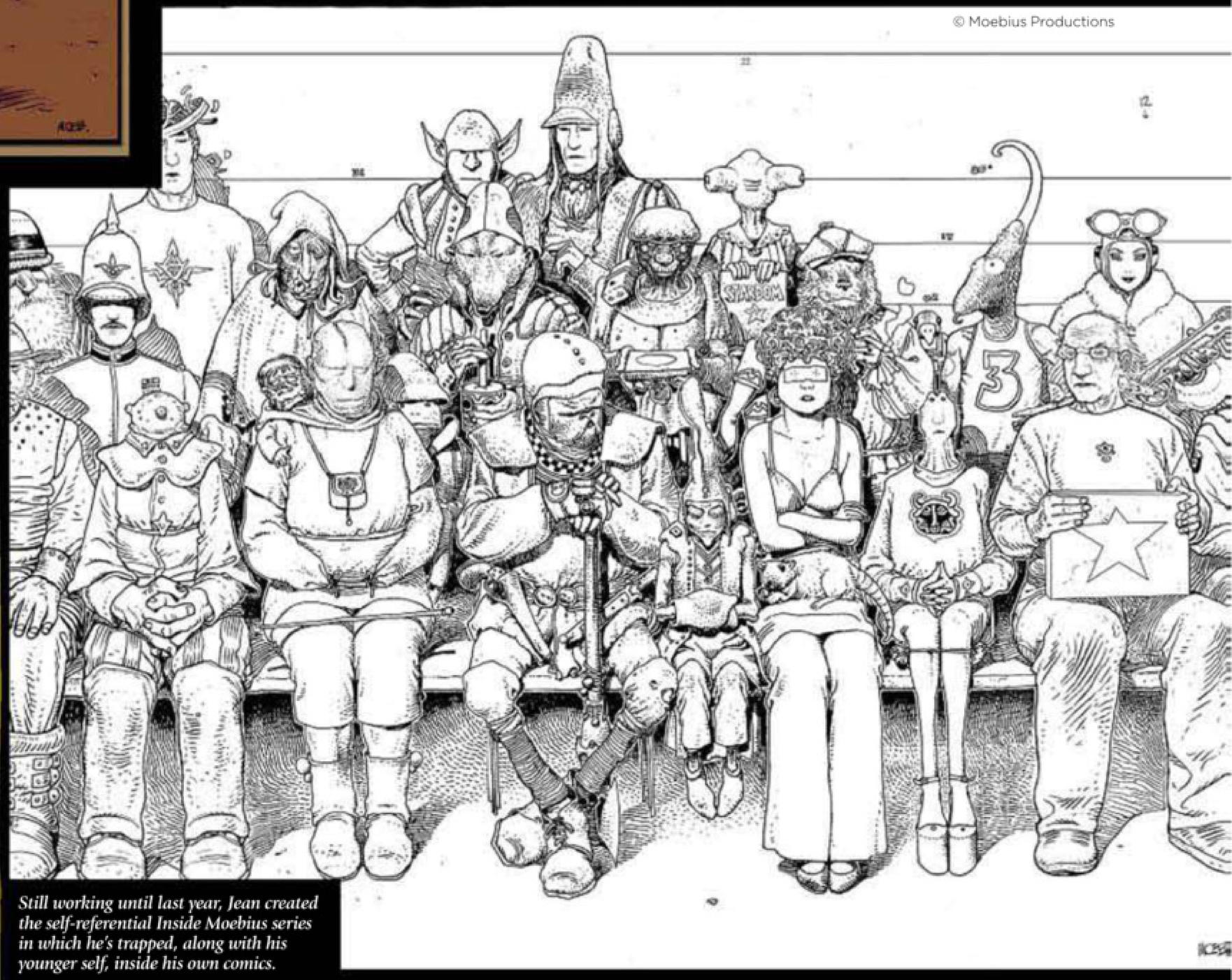
"He was a giant, and his passing is a tragic loss. For me it's a loss of someone who has gifted me inspiration and guidance for the past 20 years. I hope he knew how much his work meant to so many people." ADI GRANOV



© Moebius Productions

As Moebius, Jean explored dream-like imaginary. His later work focused on organic shapes and metaphor.

© Moebius Productions



Still working until last year, Jean created the self-referential Inside Moebius series in which he's trapped, along with his younger self, inside his own comics.

to work on Dune, based on Frank Herbert's epic sci-fi novel.

Despite Dune never making it off the drawing board, Jean impressed. "It was like watching something supernatural happen," commented Dan O'Bannon in a BBC interview from 2004. "He was the greatest genius of all of us, but also the quietest."

In time, Jean's work in concept design led to more film projects, and he worked as costume and set designer on Alien, TRON, Willow, The Abyss and The Fifth Element. Jean likened being hired to work in Hollywood as 'being invited to Olympus'. He had always distanced himself from European culture – from Blueberry onwards the artist had a love of American culture – so here on America's West Coast, he was a guest of his own gods.

THE ARTIST MET THE BUSINESSMAN

Despite his success in film, Jean fell out of love with Hollywood. The films were "landmarks in my career but products of an industry", he later commented, revealing that the lack of personal connection with the films pushed him back into comics, ultimately leading to working with Marvel. "I wouldn't even categorise him as a comic artist. He's just a brilliant artist," said Marvel's Stan Lee after the pair had worked together on 1988's Silver Surfer: Parable.

Jean brought his own sensibilities to the Silver Surfer comic. Elegant, even awkward, panels that would never normally appear in a Marvel strip were splashed across Parable.

"I love that stuff he did with Stan Lee. His work is full of thoughtfulness and people pondering and searching," says Jim Lee of Jean's Marvel work. While Mike Mignola, a long-standing fan, says: "It was an exciting time, because for American comics we thought 'now things will get very interesting, now things will get very different, we'll be free to create strange work, more experimental work'."

> "I wouldn't even categorise him as a comic artist. He's just a brilliant artist"
>
> STAN LEE

Jean was an artist in love with the role of being an artist, and all that it entailed. He would dissect his work, looking for a better perception and reflection: "a search for truth," he told us a year ago. As well as working on a new Arzach book, he tackled the manga genre with Jiro Taniguchi, was in demand with France's fashion editors, and created many book covers.

Brazilian author Paulo Coelho, whose best-selling 1995 novel The Alchemist was illustrated by Jean under the name Moebius, paid tribute to the artist: "The great Moebius died today, but the great Moebius is still alive," he tweeted. "Your body died today, your work is more alive than ever."



© Moebius Productions

As Gir, the artist explored real and gritty worlds, such as his famous comic strip Blueberry, so named after the bush the character hid in as he deserted the army.

Last year, France's Cartier Foundation for Contemporary Art staged a major retrospective of Jean's work, including original art from his recent Inside Moebius book, an illustrated autobiographical fantasy in which the artist stars as himself trapped inside his own comic world.

This sense of entrapment permeated Jean's thinking. As Moebius and Gir he could briefly escape into his imagination and art, but his life was always moving in one direction. He once described his life as a train racing to a final stop. He could move between carriages and look from the windows to observe events without affecting them, but he couldn't change direction or slow down. Now Jean has reached the final stop, and left the world in a more interesting place because of his journey.

Development sheet

PROJECT TITLE: PATROL VEHICLE

Wanting to create a patrol vehicle that would look at home both on tarmac and off-road, **Eric Lutes** designed a balanced buggy that's armoured, agile and can mix it in a fight

Artist PROFILE

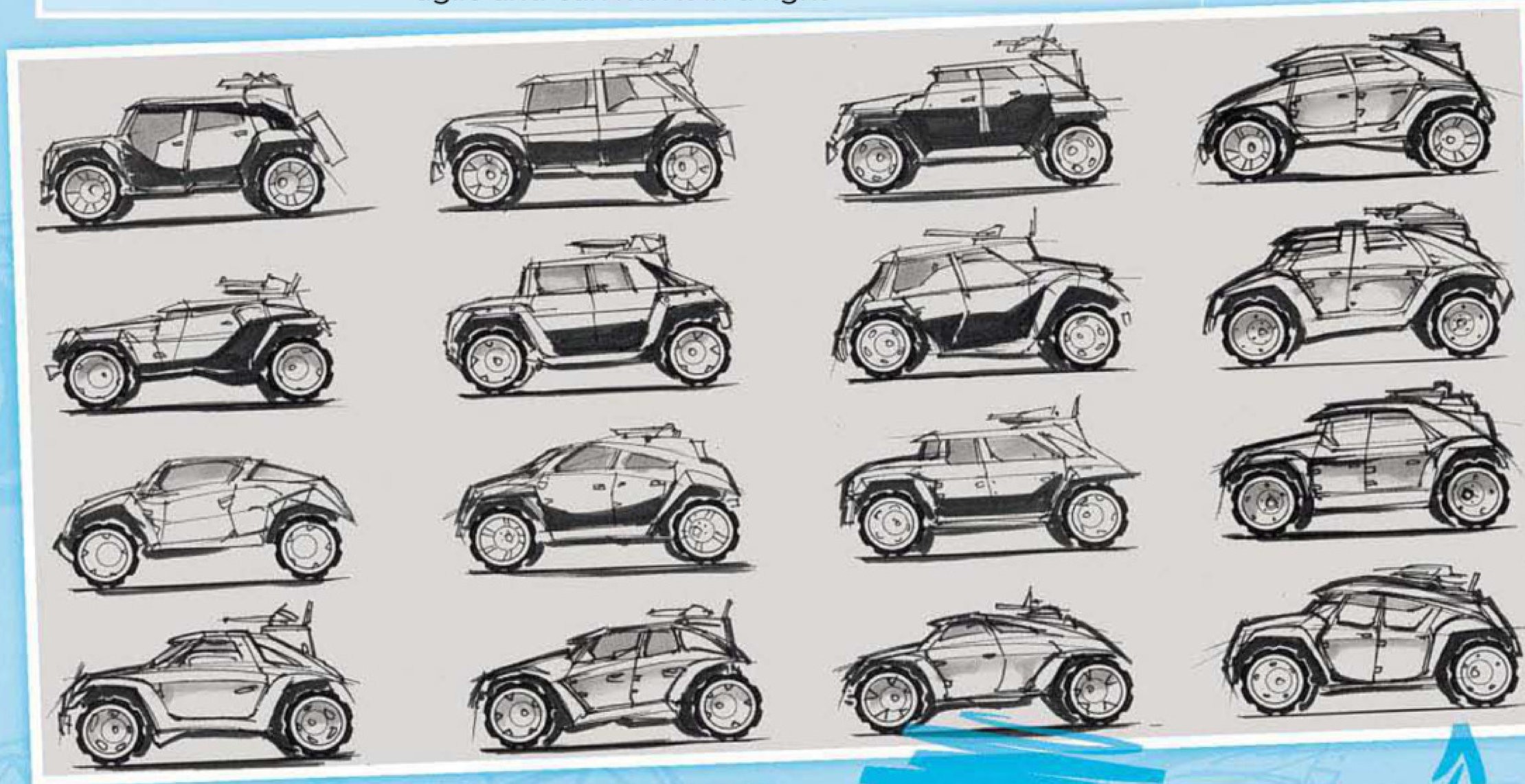
Eric Lutes

COUNTRY: US

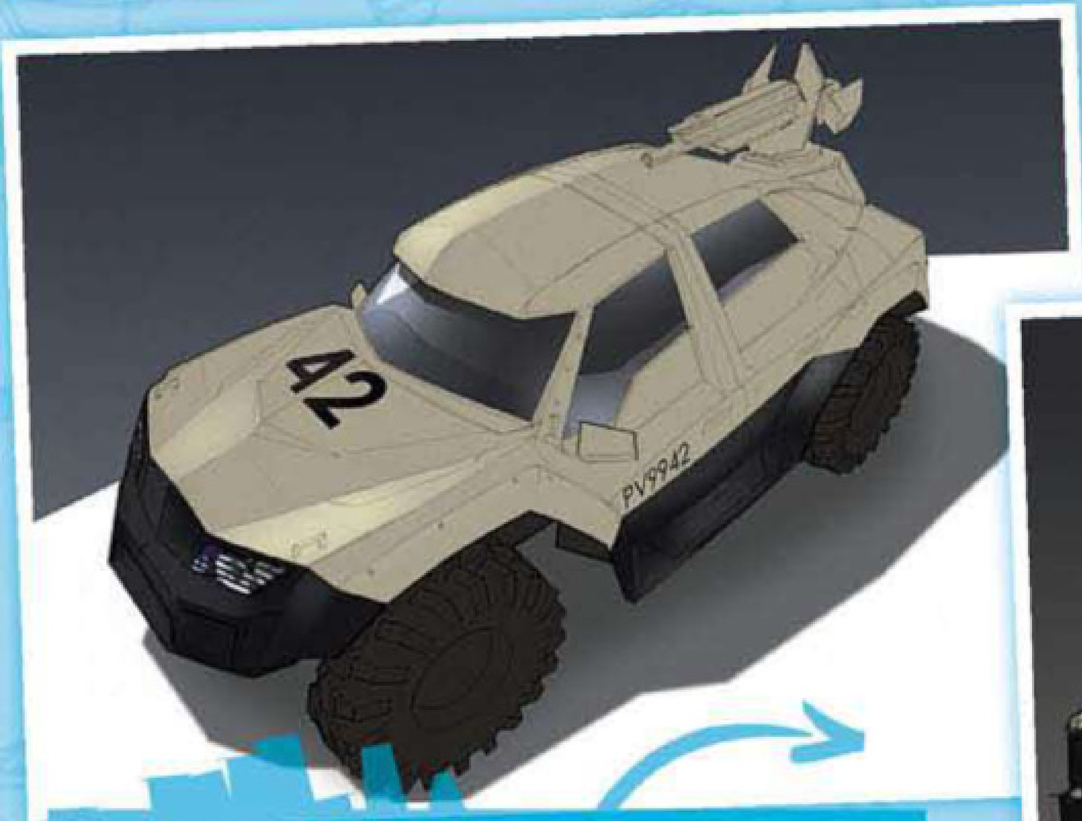


Concept artist Eric studied product design with a definite focus on entertainment at Art Center College of Design in Pasadena, California and has acquired over 13 years' concept art and graphic design experience in the entertainment industry.

www.ericlutes.blogspot.com



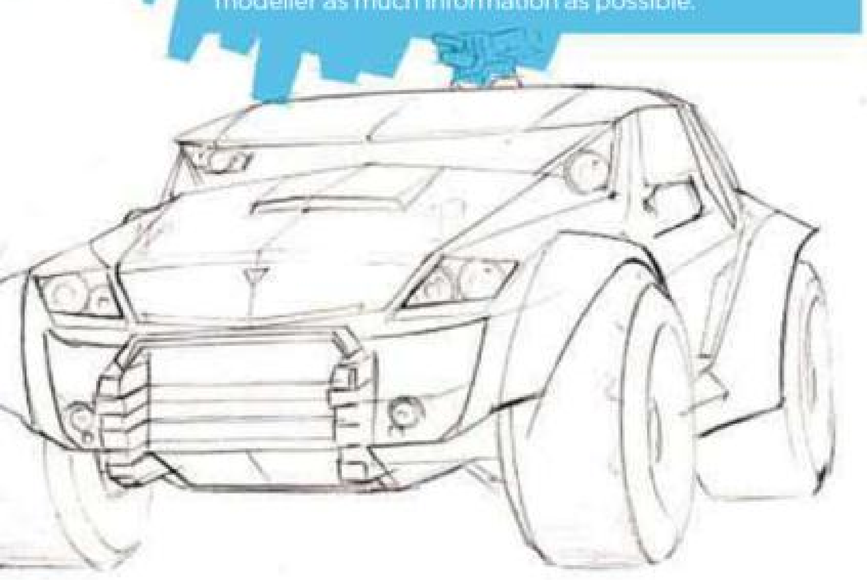
Generate ideas My first step is usually a series of rapid ideations. I like to do thumbnails on pen and paper because it keeps things quick and avoids the temptation to start noodling in detail. This is where I filter my own ideas and make sure I like where the design is going.

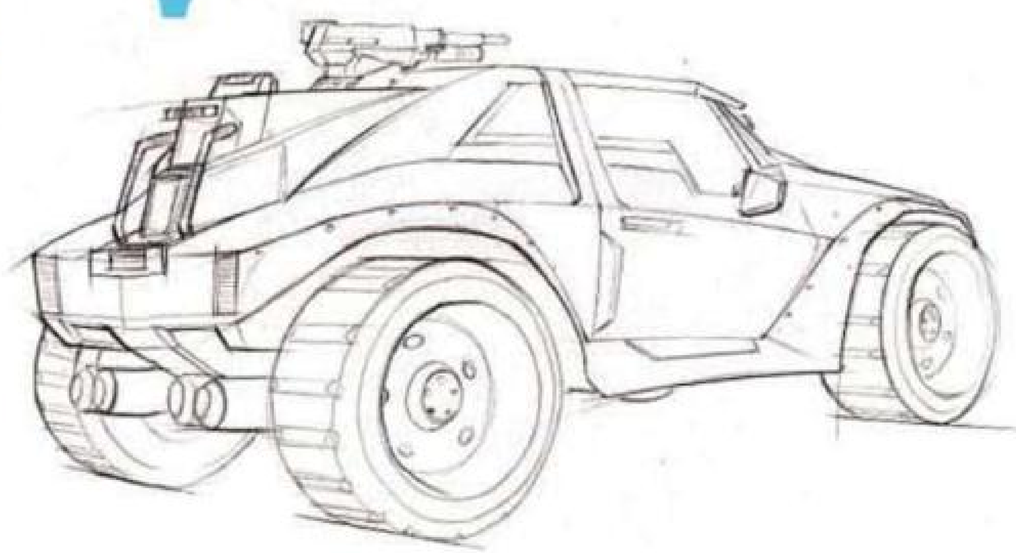


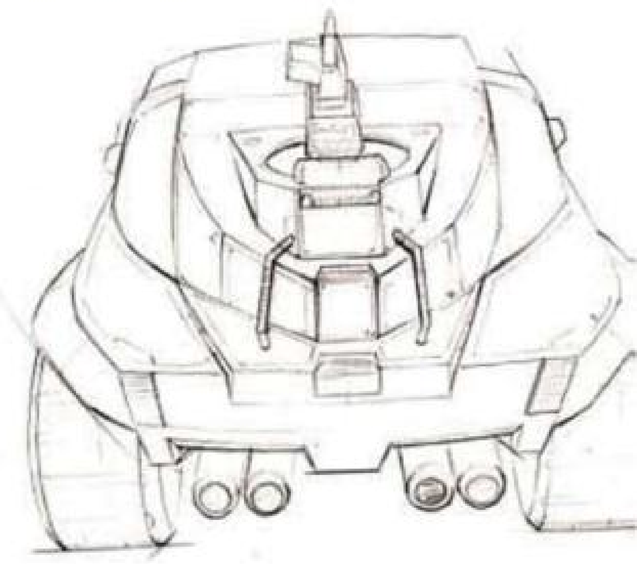


Two directions It's important for me to try fleshing out a couple different approaches to the design, so I don't become too attached to one idea. The first iteration is a faster, leaner type of vehicle inspired by Baja-style race cars. The other direction features more sport utility vehicle characteristics. In the end, the idea of a faster, leaner patrol vehicle is more interesting. I won't always worry about colouring at this stage, but I consider the markings closely, which would make a big difference as to how the design would read.

Explore the design As I get closer to the final design, I draw the vehicle from at least a few different views. When designing something that'll eventually be created in 3D, it's important to make sure the design works from all angles, and to give the 3D modeller as much information as possible.









Adding decals This is the stage I typically have the most fun with. Starting with a simple greyscale render, I explore the vehicle's graphics. I try to make each one as different as possible, because it can really affect how your eye reads the design.

Final touches This is the point where I do all the small surface details that'll help sell the final product. Details such as door handles, rivets, mirrors and panels help establish scale and make it look like something that will work in the real world.



SEND US YOUR CONCEPTS!

Are you working on a project, or doodling your own development sketches that you'd like to share with us?

LET US KNOW! Email your WIPs and final images to: **develop@imaginefx.com**

StoreMags

THE ART OF WONDER WOMAN

Wonder Woman's allure is as strong as ever – not bad for an octogenarian. We explore DC's reinvention of the character, and look into the challenges of pencilling a true comic icon...

Go down to your local comic shop and look for Wonder Woman. She's hard to find. That's not because DC has either pulled the title or rolled back the print run. On the contrary, since the company relaunched its entire range of 52 comics, Wonder Woman has been selling out. Issue one of the new series had to be reprinted, such was the demand, and now Wonder Woman is the top-selling comic book with a female lead character.

Looking at the latest issues, we can safely say that the iconic Wonder Woman is back. The classic Diana, the Amazon princess, hasn't really been messed with in the relaunch. However, writer Brian Azzarello and artist Cliff Chiang have come up with a storyline that accentuates her strength, compassion and noble nature.



It's a dark and gritty new telling of Wonder Woman that brings in the gods and monsters of ancient Greece. Diana is the illegitimate daughter of Zeus and Hippolyta, Queen of the Amazons, and now that Zeus appears to be dead his wife Hera is out for revenge.

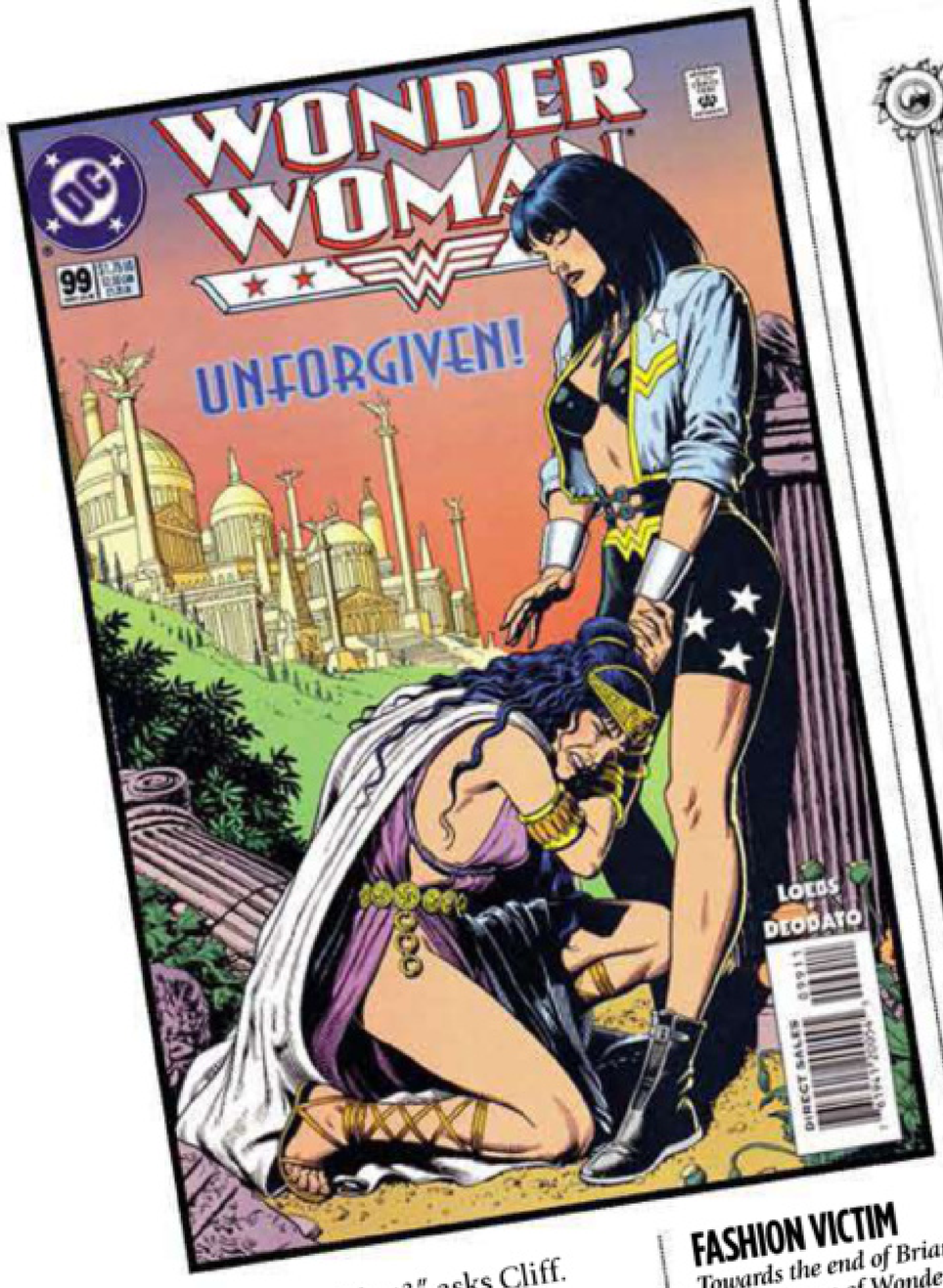
New fans seem attracted to the noir-like setting Chiang has conjured up, and the way Brian is treating the Greek gods like corrupt royalty, similar to the Borgias of 15th century Italy. "One of the things that we looked at early on was that while Wonder Woman as a singular character's really great, how do you

THE NEW 52

Wonder Woman issues one to six, collected together in a graphic novel format, comes out 30 May from DC.

Wonder Woman is ™ and © DC Comics.

DYNAMIC COVER
Issue 1's cover of the new series indicates the return of Diana to an ancient mythological storyline.



take advantage of that?" asks Cliff. "We decided to make her a foil for a larger cast, get her involved with the rest of the Greek gods and make them part of her family. Brian has said they're a really old, original crime family and if you went to a family reunion, imagine that on a much grander scale."

NO MORE THE WRESTLER

Cliff has also been working with Tony Akins, who drew issues five and six. While some recent iterations of Wonder Woman over the past 20 years have been busty bruisers, resembling female wrestlers on WWE, now she's regained a slender and classical look. Tony Akins is certain it's the right way to go: "Wonder Woman is not a lingerie model, swimsuit model, or a MILF or a Hollywood actress as I believe a lot of the disciples of certain styles treat her. She

FASHION VICTIM

Towards the end of Brian Bolland's run of Wonder Woman covers in the late 1990s, she appeared in an updated costume – shorts, bobbed hair, and a tiny jacket. This new look wasn't a favourite with fans.



BARBARIAN

In issue 21 of volume three, artist Aaron Lopresti enjoyed presenting Wonder Woman alongside Beowulf fighting Nordic demons.

should be shaped in our eyes as we would shape her in our clear hearts: virtuous, noble, strong and completely bad-assed."

Her demeanour goes back to what a princess of the Amazons might really be like. She's not quite aloof, but she's no nonsense and isn't there to chat. The stark illustrative tone Cliff has set for the new series suits this approach well. There's nothing superfluous in the panels, no fussy detail clouding any composition.

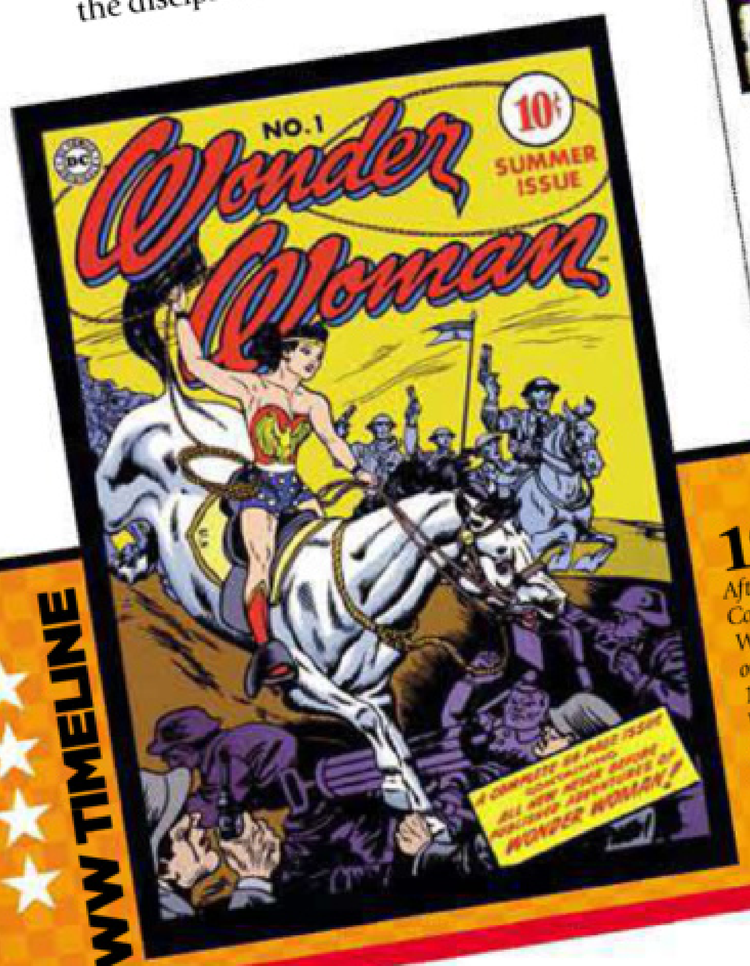
As with past Wonder Woman artists, the challenge has been to present a strong woman to a largely male readership in a way that's compelling and credible. She needs to stand as an equal to DC's other two main icons: Superman and Batman. "There's a perception that when you pick up a Wonder Woman book it might have less of a gritty story. Having pared it back, with darker artwork, I think it's a more noir-ish feel," says Cliff. "I think it's a great sign to readers that they can pick up a Wonder Woman and there's more you can dive into. What Brian and I can do is help people to see that she's definitely part of that trinity and she deserves it."

Of course she deserves it. Wonder Woman has been a regular title for 80 years now – she got her own regular series in



WILL THEY, WON'T THEY?

Several storylines have speculated about a romance between Diana and Superman, including issue 141, which featured a cover by Adam Hughes.



WW TIMELINE

1942

After appearing in Sensation Comics and All-Star Comics, Wonder Woman gained her own series in the summer of 1942. It was written by William Moulton Marston, who used the pen name Charles Moulton, and drawn by HG Peter. America had joined World War II and so had Wonder Woman.



1951

William Moulton Marston passed away in 1947, but his iconic creation lived on. Seen here, issue 45 was written by Robert Kanigher. Wonder Woman's golden lasso has endured all her many costume changes, and reflects the fact that Marston invented the polygraph machine – otherwise known as the lie detector.



1962

After original Wonder Woman artist HG Peter died in 1958, Ross Andru and Mike Esposito took over the production of art on the title. In issue 132 Wonder Woman is regressed by a scientific weapon to Wonder Tot to make sense of a baby's witnessing of a UFO abduction, and then becomes Wonder Girl and then becomes Wonder Girl to battle alien robots.

"Wonder Woman is not a lingerie or swimsuit model, or a MILF or a Hollywood actress, as a lot of the disciples of certain styles treat her"

WONDER WOMAN

VICTORIOUS
Terry and Rachel Dodson drew and inked Wonder Woman during volume three. One of their favourite covers was issue 13, seen here.

FRONT...
Just Imagine Stan Lee's Wonder Woman – here, she's a goddess from South American mythology with a white and gold outfit and a powerful glowing rod instead of a lasso.





...AND BACK
Adam Hughes riffed on Stan Lee's story and Jim Lee's artwork when he created this all-action back cover, depicting the Maria Mendoza version of Wonder Woman.

WONDER WOMAN REIMAGINED

Think that the Amazonian princess has only worn red, white and blue? Think again…

First appearing in 1941, Wonder Woman has reinvented herself more times than David Bowie. In 2001, Marvel legend Stan Lee teamed up with DC artist Jim Lee on a one-off called Just Imagine Stan Lee's Wonder Woman. Scott Williams and Alex Sinclair also worked on the artwork, and Adam Hughes did the back cover.

Here Wonder Woman isn't Diana Prince at all. She's a downtrodden Peruvian woman called Maria Mendoza, and the Greek pantheon has been replaced with South American gods. The head of the corrupt Guitez corporation is possessed by a demonic monster, while the spirit of a goddess imbues Maria with Wonder Woman's powers – an Amazon from the Amazon, so to speak. The Lasso of Truth is replaced by a powerful golden staff and she's clad in a golden girdle, skin-tight white trousers and various bits of golden armour. She transforms to and from her Wonder Woman state using a golden bracelet.

Today Jim Lee has just led the redesign of Wonder Woman at DC, but working with Stan Lee in 2001, he was in awe of the Marvel maestro. "He's an amazing creator, and the first time he's doing something big for DC, I get to be involved," says Jim Lee. "With Wonder Woman he did something very different and contemporary and it was great to collaborate with him. And we worked Marvel style, which was really thrilling. It remains a highlight of my career."



1969

With the Vietnam War at its peak and anti-government protestors at their most vocal, Wonder Woman's star-spangled costume was ditched by new artist Mike Sekowsky and writer Denny O'Neil. She became a groovy chick, lost her powers and started using martial arts and yoga. Here in issue 181 she has a Star Trek-esque outfit on.



1972

Issue 200 – the horror! Jeff Jones put together the cover, and the pencil art inside was produced by Dick Giordano. Wonder Woman's costume had settled down to an all-white outfit and she worked with sidekick and potential suitor Jonny Double to fight an evil disfigured villainess and a mad scientist.

ICONIC POSE
Issue five of the third series – May 2007 – saw Terry Dodson pencilling this iconic cover. Isolating the character on blue makes her stand out a mile.







MEET DECAY
In issue four of his five-year run on Wonder Woman, George Perez pitted her against a daughter of Medusa who makes living things rot by touching them. Dynamic and direct storytelling.



INSPIRING
Aaron Lopresti included his daughter and her school friend in the cover for issue 25 of the third series, being inspired by Wonder Woman's physique.

CLIFF CHIANG AND THE NEW 52

We asked the current Wonder Woman artist about his approach to the character having her slate wiped clean



When you look back on the artists who've drawn Wonder Woman, whose work catches your eye?
Some of the early stuff, like HG Peter's work, was really charming and interesting in the Golden Age, using a strong stylistic component that not a lot of people were doing. He was really bold. Over the years I love the stuff that Mike Sekowsky and Dick Giordano did in the 60s and I love Garcia-Lopez, Phil Jimenez and Adam Hughes. They've all done these different interpretations of the character, but they all feel very sincere. It's clear that the artists loved the character and they've tried to bring something beautiful and positive out of it.

What's important to how Wonder Woman is presented in the New 52?
There's a tendency to see Wonder Woman as being on a pedestal, like she's a perfect person and it's a nice compliment – but I think it's hard to write stories about someone who doesn't have some characteristics that you can relate to. When you have someone who can't make any mistakes, how do you build a story about that, how do you make the audience relate to somebody like that? So what we've tried to do is show that there's a very human side to her, despite being the daughter of Zeus.

Tell us about how the costume looks?
The costume was done by Jim Lee. He did almost all the costume redesigns and tried to inject a new type of energy into these classic designs and so I've adapted Jim's design slightly to fit with my style. Jim's got a very energetic, frenetic artistic side, where mine tends to be a bit more spare and simple, so I've tried to take the elements and make them fit with what I do.

And Wonder Woman the character...?
The Wonder Woman I'm trying to draw is the most imposing but beautiful woman you'll ever run across. I think if you've ever seen a tall woman walk into the room it's kind of amazing the way all eyes generally do go to a woman who's over six foot. Trying to get that feeling into the drawings is challenging, but I think it's great.

1942, before Superman or Batman. This is the third time the book has restarted and while Wonder Woman has been taken in different directions by artists and writers over the years, the core principles have always been there. William Moulton Marston, the original writer, wanted to create a female role model who would espouse the value of love and peace, and be equal to men. It was an idealistic notion at a time when women were expected to stay at home cooking, cleaning and rearing their young, but Marston believed that young people reading comics might adopt more progressive views. The Greek princess came to a warlike Man's World from the peaceful home of the Amazons, Paradise Island.

Wonder Woman did all the things male characters did in the 1940s. She battled the Nazis, took on gangsters, rescued those in peril and fought aliens and monsters, as well as dealing with the immortals back home.

> "Wonder Woman chose to come to Man's world to help others"

Most female leads in the comics of the day pursued romance. Andy Mangels runs the online Wonder Woman Museum (**www.wonderwomanmuseum.com**), and is one of her biggest fans. "The aspects of Wonder Woman that make her appealing go beyond many other superheroes."

SHE'S HERE TO HELP

"Wonder Woman's strong and confident, not psychologically tormented, and unlike many heroes, has always tried to reform her villains rather than imprison or beat them up," says Andy. "She isn't a doomed orphan or the result of a scientific accident; as the best her people had to offer, she chose to come to Man's World to help others."

Although burdened with ideals, Wonder Woman has thrived and is one of the world's most recognisable comic book characters. Yet she's always been a challenge for the artists drawing her. The majority have



1983
The double-length anniversary issue 300 saw 10 artists creating different sections of a storyline in which Wonder Woman visits her parallel self on Earth-Two, proposes to long-term sidekick Steve Trevor, but marries Superman, and wakes up to find it was all just a dream.



1985
The DC Universe had become too convoluted, and the over-arching storyline Crisis on Infinite Earths attempted to explain and resolve many backstory issues. Wonder Woman's personal crisis began in issue 327 with Aztec gods, infinity loops and trouble on Paradise Island.



1987
Back to the start with issue one. George Perez cleaned the Wonder Woman cupboard, revamping her appearance and nature for volume two. The stories and the artwork were more direct, and the Amazon princess comes to the world of mortals to promote peace and protect the weak.

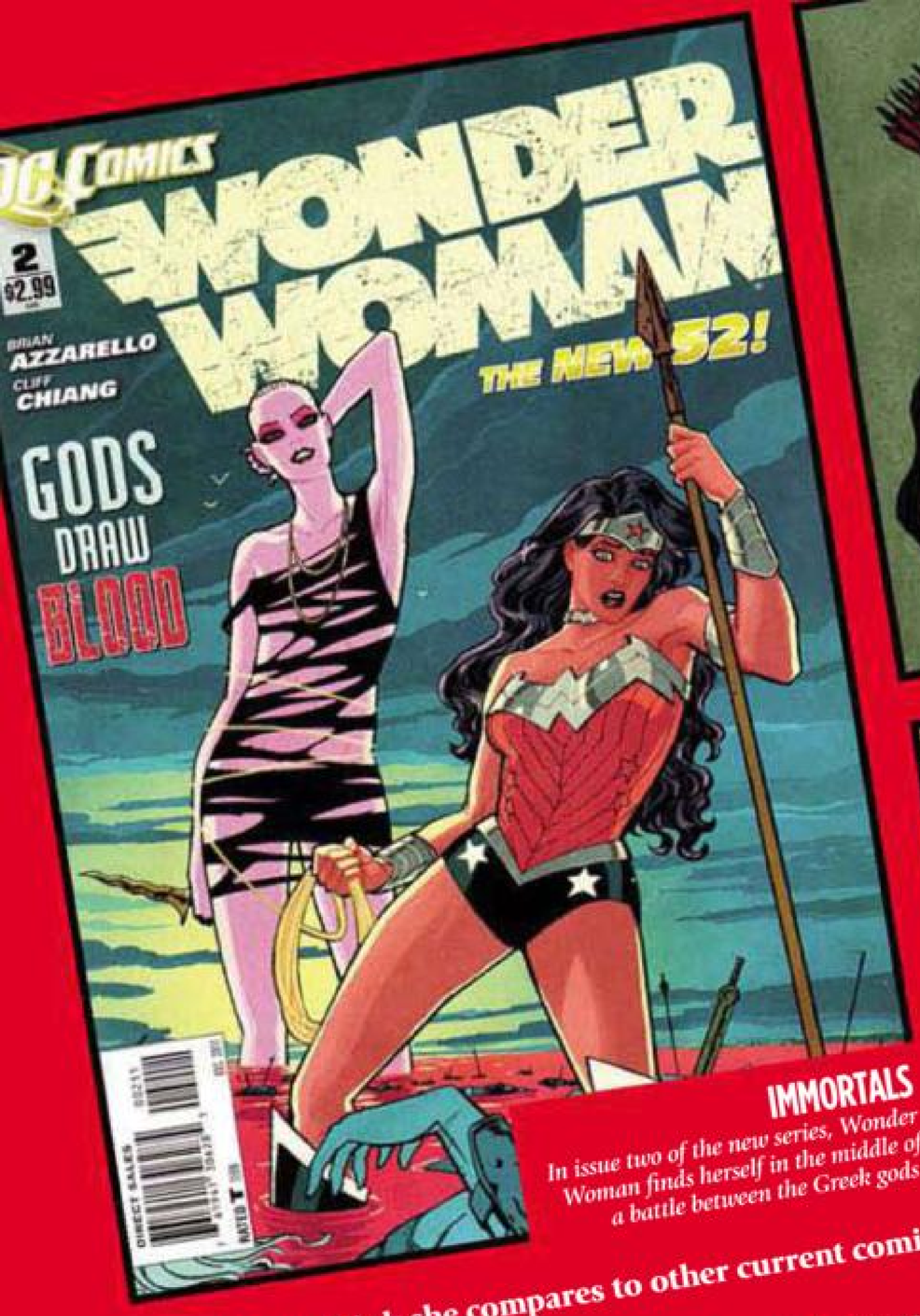


NO MESSING
The Wonder Woman drawn by Cliff Chiang in the latest series isn't particularly chatty.

CONCEPTS
In these images Cliff Chiang was developing concepts for Hermes, messenger of the gods, and one of Diana's allies.



THE ART OF WONDER WOMAN



IMMORTALS

In issue two of the new series, Wonder Woman finds herself in the middle of a battle between the Greek gods.



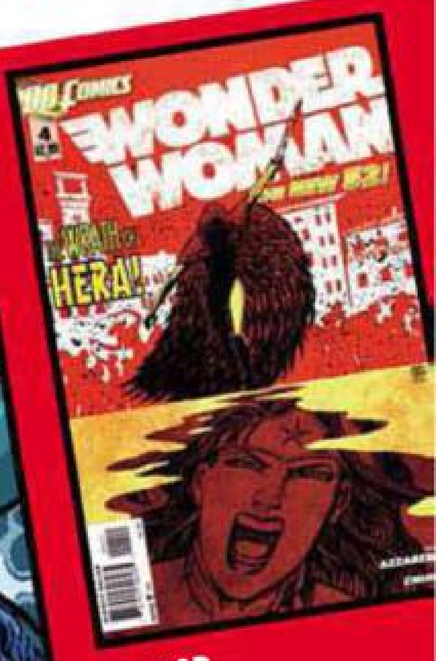
CENTAURS

More concept work by Cliff Chiang, here developing centaurs, evil servants and assassins sent by Hera.



LEVIATHAN

In the new series Wonder Woman is far from all-powerful. She must tread carefully around gods like Poseidon, brother of Zeus.



TERROR

Issue four of the new series. Will Hera be able to kill every illegitimate child of Zeus?

HADES

Tony Akins drew Hades as though the god were a young boy, his head alight like molton wax and his peculiar armour delineates his skeletal spine at the back.

How do you think she compares to other current comic book heroines?

Of course, she's the best! She carries a lot of weight because of that. Some of the other characters may have more freedom – artists have more freedom to have them act and say what we want – but with Wonder Woman people definitely have expectations and I think that can be a good thing and can also sometimes be limiting. But we want Wonder Woman to embody everything about great women.

And what are those expectations?

Everyone has a different idea of what a woman should be. Some people think she should be strong and independent, which I agree with. Other people think that she should primarily be loving and compassionate and other people think no, she should just be out there kicking ass. It's a tug of war. But what the writer Brian Azzarello and I wanted to do something that feels clean and maybe isn't 100 per cent what you'd traditionally think of as Wonder Woman, but is still compelling and feels honest.



1992

After a five-year run on the comic, George Perez moved on and Brian Bolland drew the cover with Jim Thompson pencilling, written by William Messner-Loebs. Issue 64 demonstrates Diana's protective nature as she foils a kidnapping and saves a toddler. Simple and direct.



1996

Another comic great, John Byrne, worked on the title during volume two. Wonder Woman had a bobbed haircut, shorts and a jacket when he took over, but he brought back the big hair and classic costume. Note the symmetrical cover for issue 102, which was a common artistic trend at the time.



2006

Wonder Woman goes back to issue one again, with husband and wife team Terry and Rachel Dodson working on the art. This was a hugely popular issue that sold nearly 140,000 copies. There was a return to Wonder Woman keeping her identity secret, doubling as Diana Prince.



SKETCHES

Early work from issue one of the new series by Cliff Chiang: Diana rescues a girl impregnated by Zeus.



StormMags



THE MAGIC OF PEREZ

In the capable hands of George Perez, Wonder Woman returned to her godlike roots

A major turning point came for Wonder Woman in 1987, when the comic was relaunched with George Perez doing the artwork and plotline. The book had been published sporadically in 1984 and 85 with the over-arching storyline Crisis on Infinite Earths taking in Wonder Woman and most of the other DC titles. Comics were becoming massively popular, and the proliferation of titles made them incredibly complex. DC's icons were reinvented. The Dark Knight Returns pitched Batman as a dark anti-hero, and Man of Steel saw Superman extensive backstory cleaned out.

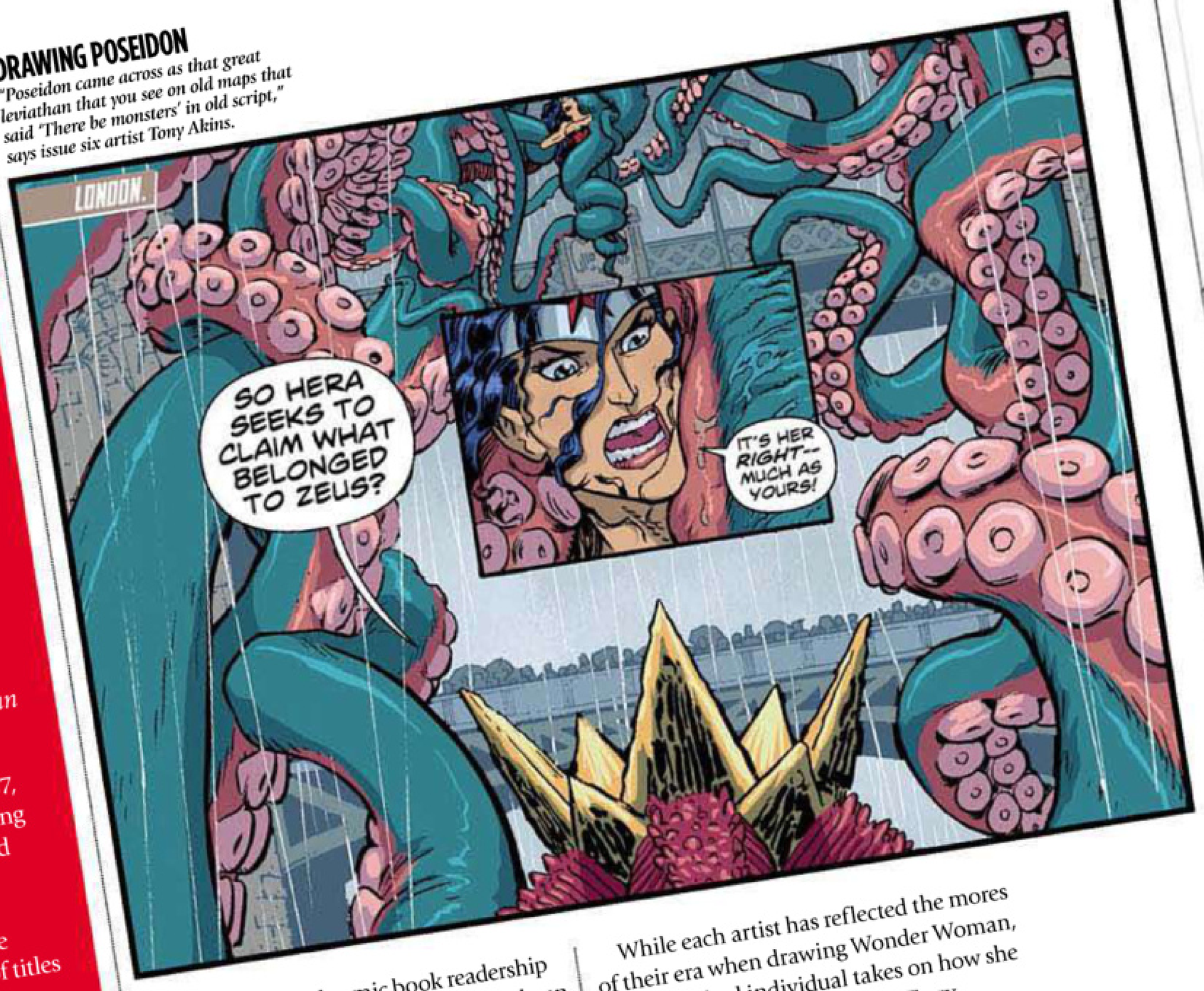
George tied Diana more closely with Greek mythology, bridging the worlds of men and immortals, into which she was born. The comic restarted with issue one and here Wonder Woman appears powerful, noble and somewhat naïve as she grapples with evil forces, and the publicity she gets from saving people's lives.

Comic artists widely recognise George as one of the greats, alongside Wonder Woman's originators William Moulton Marston and HG Peter. "He brought so much to that table, primarily his gift for storytelling, drawing, and design," says Phil Jimenez. "His Diana lived and breathed. He brought a vision to the character few have had since. She was certainly different than her pre-Crisis antecedents, to the chagrin of many. He transformed the Amazons from a technologically advanced nation of super-women into a Bronze Age warrior tribe of normals. It's still a contentious point between fans to this day.

"He made Wonder Woman and her world real to many who demanded such things, even from stories about Amazons and gods. He established a mission for Diana, a primary enemy in Ares, the god of war, and a point of view that evolved from a Thor-like warrior into an advocate for peace and hope, and always for love."

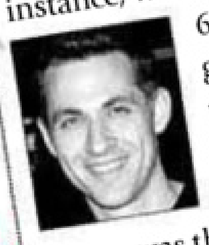
DRAWING POSEIDON

"Poseidon came across as that great leviathan that you see on old maps that said 'There be monsters' in old script," says issue six artist Tony Akins.



been men, and comic book readership is also male-dominated. There's always been a balancing act: strength and femininity, looking sexy but not being a sex object. And she's generally rolled with the times in terms of her body shape and fashion.

"Her look evolved a lot more than the other two in the DC trinity, Batman and Superman," says Alex Garner, our cover artist. "The martial arts Wonder Woman for instance, was absurd but smacked of the 60s, even though people generally didn't find it very progressive. But in my opinion, the 90s version with the jacket, belts and biker shorts was the absolute worst. Everything that was bad about 90s comics was put in that costume."



While each artist has reflected the mores of their era when drawing Wonder Woman, they've all had individual takes on how she should appear as well. In 2006 Terry Dodson drew the comic when volume three was launched. "In my own case, it was how to portray a beautiful strong princess," he says. "The one thing I wanted to do with her costume was to make it subtly bigger. It seemed as though her costume was getting smaller over the years. I felt that I could add a few inches of dignity."

> **"It seemed as though her costume was getting smaller over the years. I felt that I could add a few inches of dignity"**

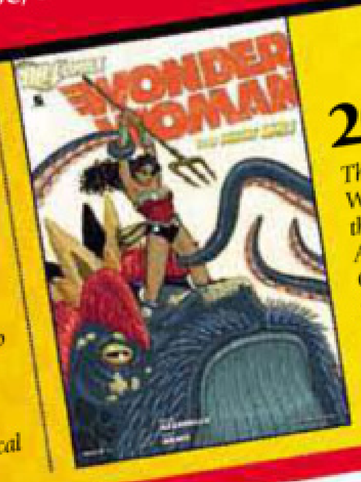
Aaron Lopresti worked on the title during the same period. For him Wonder Woman's strength would come from her athleticism: "I tried to approach her more as an athletic superhero than a sex symbol or sex object. She's really the female Superman and needs to be treated with





2010

After 44 issues of volume three, Wonder Woman returns to the numbering system that began back in 1942 and instead of issue 45, issue 600 is released to fans' delight. A split cover run featuring artists like Adam Hughes and Phil Jimenez helped more than double typical sales figures.



2011

The New 52 kicks in and Wonder Woman restarts for the third time. Writer Brian Azzarello and artist Cliff Chiang come up with a story pitting the immortals against one another with Princess Diana in the middle of it all. In issue two, Wonder Woman meets Poseidon.

PROTECTOR

Even though the new series is darker than Wonder Woman has been in the past, Diana's sense of justice and desire to protect mortals shines through.

THE ART OF WONDER WOMAN



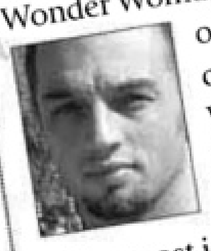
respect. She's an Amazon princess, not some flowery waif. Obviously she should be beautiful, but she's also a warrior capable of kicking some serious backside."

LIFE BEYOND THE PAGE

Some artists taking on the book have been surprised by the loyalty of its fans. Wonder Woman has a wider social importance than other comic characters. In 1972, she was on the cover of the first issue of the American feminist magazine Ms. And in 1977, The New Adventures of Wonder Woman, a live-action series starring Linda Carter, first appeared on television. The character is both a feminist and a gay icon.



JAWS OF CERBERUS
In issue six of the new series, Diana protects mankind from the hellish war between Hades and Poseidon.



Phil Jimenez both wrote and pencilled Wonder Woman from 2000 to 2003 and is one of the few openly gay comic book artists. For him, Wonder Woman's challenge to gender stereotypes has been crucial. "I tend to think of the most iconic iterations of Wonder Woman as gay, as feminist, as 'queer' in the broadest sense," he explains.

"Her character explores and exalts ideas that are traditionally 'other'. When Wonder Woman was created, she espoused ideas and virtues that were almost antithetical to concepts commonly held about men and women and gender roles, and war, mythology and philosophy. Visually, her trappings suggest a certain 'bigness' that lend to gay camp, and the Wonder Woman TV show remains a favourite among gay men of a certain age."

Now and again, her sexuality has been hijacked and steered towards the lascivious, but in general the original ideals of the character have remained intact. In the hands of Brian Azzarello and Cliff Chiang, it seems her strong, independent and classical stature is at the fore once again, too. At 80 years of age, there's plenty more to come from Wonder Woman, and we're looking forward to it.

THE NAZIS
Early on, Wonder Woman fought the Nazis. This is Terry Dodson's cover art for issue 15 of series three.



MANGA DIANA?

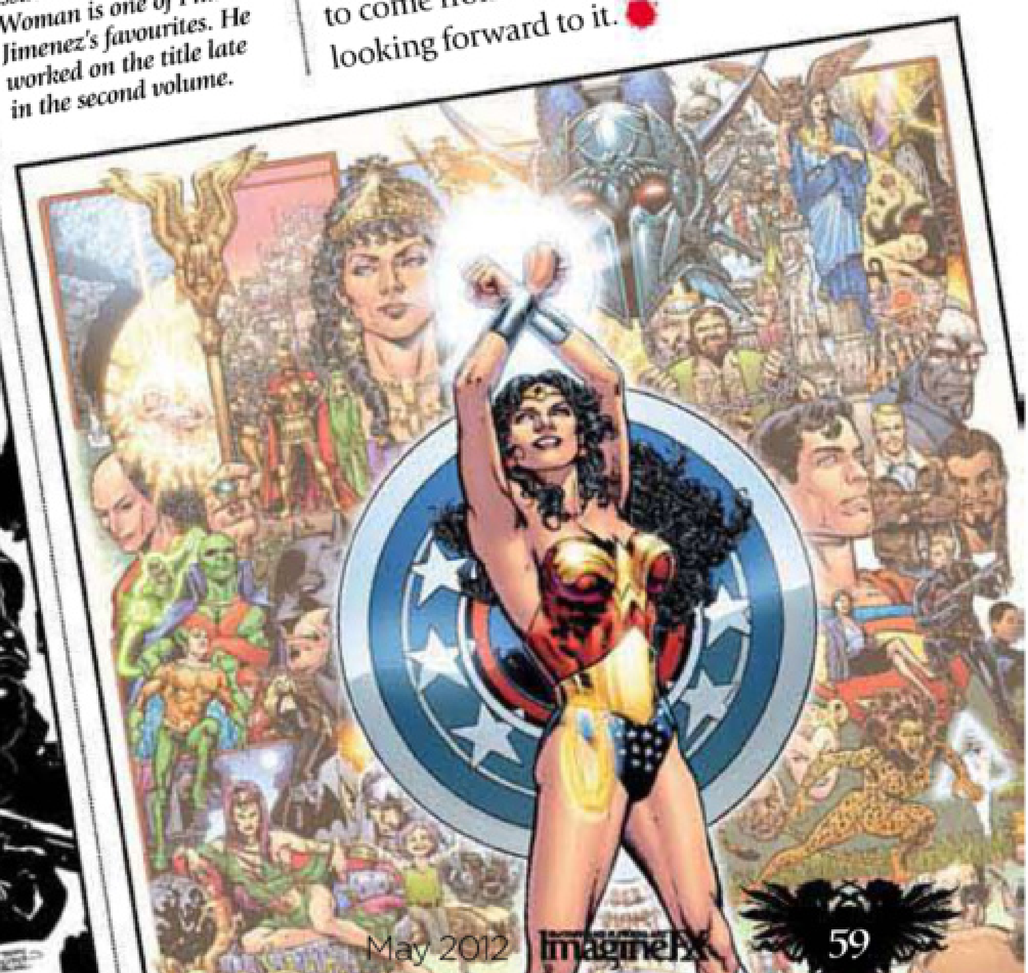
"I also really like the manga Wonder Woman splash page I did for issue 35 (volume three) just because I have never drawn manga before and probably never will again," says Aaron Lopresti.



ADAM HUGHES

One of the most widely praised Wonder Woman cover artists is Adam Hughes, and he created this image for his alternate cover for issue 600. He liked to invoke the spirit of HG Peter's work in his images.

PHIL JIMENEZ
This alternate cover for issue 600 of Wonder Woman is one of Phil Jimenez's favourites. He worked on the title late in the second volume.



FANTASY & SCI-FI DIGITAL ART ImagineFX

Sketchbook

Alexandre Puvilland

This DreamWorks animation artist and prolific online comic creator reveals the landscapes of the places he loves

Artist PROFILE

Alexandre Puvilland

COUNTRY: US



"Having grown up in France during the eighties, I may have mad cow disease or I may be perfectly normal. I'll find out for sure when I'm 75," says Alexandre, who works for DreamWorks Animation. He co-illustrated the graphic novel of Prince of Persia, and the upcoming Templar with his wife LeUyen Pham. They live in San Francisco with their sons Leo and Adrien.

www.alexpuvilland.com

STUDIO SKETCH

"A view of our studio from a while back. It doesn't look like that anymore, but we still have the paper cutter. I like the mix of black and white and colours."





SAN FRAN SHIPS

"These boats are army ships moored in Alameda, east of San Francisco. I went there with some friends on Veteran's Day, I think. It's one of the three or four drawings I did in my super-wide sketchbook. That explains the weird format. Boats are really cool to draw, especially warships."

ANOTHER SKETCH OF SAN FRANCISCO

"I really like the way this one came out. Out of the many travel sketches I've done over the years, this is still one of my favourites, even more than a decade later. It's kind of depressing in a way that I haven't done better since."

"Boats are really cool to draw, especially warships"

FANTASY & SCI-FI DIGITAL ART
ImagineFX

Sketchbook

"The house we stayed at offered lots of drawing opportunities. It was great for that. No need to go anywhere"

HOLIDAY SKETCH

"A drawing from our trip to Hawaii. It'd been a long time since I had sketched in my book and it took a long time to get back into it. The house we stayed at offered lots of drawing opportunities. It was great for that. No need to go anywhere."



NEW SKETCH

"The most recent sketch of the batch. I did this in Chinatown in San Francisco. The drawing I did just before this one was way overworked and had too many details. So for this one I tried to keep things simple. It's always tricky to know when to stop."

NOE VALLEY IN SAN FRANCISCO

"I like the contrast between the trees and the architecture in the background. I was working on a movie about elephants in Asia and was looking at a lot of Chinese paintings at the time. I think that's where that composition with the trees in the foreground was inspired from."





BOURGEOIS PIG

"This is a snapshot of my former life in L.A. It's inside a coffee place called the Bourgeois Pig, which was really close from where I lived. I did the colours probably eight or nine years after the sketch, but that's how I remember it: really dim at any hour of the day."



EAST SIDE

"I drew this from the east side of San Francisco, where they have these very cool dry docks for fixing boats. This one was a huge medical boat, and yes I couldn't resist the temptation to paint the crosses red."

Want to share your sketches? Then drop us an email, with a selection of your artwork, to **sketchbook@imaginefx.com**, or upload your drawings at **www.imaginefx.com/sketchbook**.

Producing art that grabbed the viewer from the get-go was one of Ralph's talents. It certainly helped secure financing from 20th Century Fox for the first Star Wars film.

All images © Lucasfilm Ltd & TM. All rights reserved. Photograph of Ralph McQuarrie © www.ralphmcquarrie.com

Storemags.com



Ralph McQuarrie A Tribute 1929 – 2012

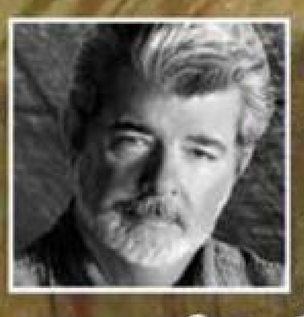
He defined the role of a concept artist and breathed life into Darth Vader. We salute the life of Ralph McQuarrie

Ralph McQuarrie, whose memorable artwork secured the backing of 20th Century Fox to make the 1977 blockbuster Star Wars, died aged 82 on 3 March at his home in Berkeley, California.

In 1975 Ralph agreed to paint a series of images for George Lucas's Star Wars. "A neat idea" recalled Ralph in our interview with the artist last year, explaining: "While I was working on these things I thought, 'Wouldn't it be great if some of these actually made it into the movie.'"

They did, of course. And onto lunch boxes, posters and model kits, books, sweet wrappers and toys. Ralph's paintings of imagined places such as Tatooine and the Death Star, as well as characters R2-D2, Luke Skywalker and Darth Vader became iconic snapshots of a galaxy far, far away.

"Ralph McQuarrie was the first person I hired to help me envision Star Wars," George Lucas said in a statement. "His genial contribution, in the form of unequalled production paintings, propelled and inspired all of the cast and crew of the original Star Wars trilogy. When words could not convey my ideas, I could always point to one of Ralph's fabulous illustrations and say, 'Do it like this.'"



> "When words could not convey my ideas, I could always point to one of Ralph's fabulous illustrations and say, 'Do it like this'" George Lucas



Ralph was adept at applying George Lucas's mantra – "faster, more intense" – to production artwork for the first three Star Wars films.

"A few years ago some colleagues and I spent an afternoon with Ralph and his artwork in the Lucasfilm archives. He was humble and grateful about the impact he has had on the concept art world. I told him that it was his artwork that made me want to be an artist. He replied, "I hear that a lot". I laughed, not because it was funny, but because coming from such a generous person I knew it was the most honest answer. The art world may have lost an icon, but Ralph's influence will live on forever in his work and in those of us he inspired."

Christian Alzmann, Lucasfilm



"I never met Ralph while working at the Ranch, but on the walls there I had the true pleasure of being surrounded by many of his rarely seen originals. What an inspiration! The real deal, too: gouache on board, brush strokes and paper. I would go to the archives as often as possible just to pore through all his other originals and working sketches and scribbles. Amazing stuff for a kid who grew up on the stuff, and an inspiration I carry with me every day on the job."

Ryan Church, art director



"Ralph was a massive influence on a generation of us that were first inspired by his illustrations for Star Wars. I loved the disparity between some of the earlier illustrations and what we saw finally on the screen, an early lesson in what concept art is about, finding the narrative in the character or scene and providing inspiration as opposed to trying to finalise a design. I had the pleasure of meeting Ralph while working in San Francisco at Doug Chiang's Ice Blink studio. Doug is obviously a big fan of Ralph's and he visited a few times. He was ridiculously humble for someone who had achieved so much. Lucas should name one of his hills or parks after him. At least get a bronze done!"

Dermot Power, concept designer

Being able to take someone else's vision and turn it into a painting is the job of a concept artist. In working on Star Wars, Ralph practically invented the role.



Ralph would go on to paint evocative scenes and design characters and spacecraft for the next two instalments of the Star Wars franchise, The Empire Strikes Back and Return of the Jedi. Although more artists were hired, Ralph's early paintings were constantly used as footprints for the Star Wars universe. Furthermore, unused paintings such as designs of the Imperial City were picked up and used in the production design of the prequels, released almost 25 years later.

"Working on the Star Wars prequels, we all strove to attempt to live up to the standards of design, mood and 'Star-Warsness' that he so clearly set," says Ryan Church, who would spend hours in the Skywalker Ranch archives scouring Ralph's original sketches for encouragement.

EARLY YEARS

Ralph's interest in art was developed as a child while living in Gary, Indiana. His ambitions were put on hold when he served in the Korean War – where he survived a bullet that pierced his helmet. He would go on to graduate from the Art Centre College of Design in Pasadena. In the early 70s Ralph began working as a technical artist for Boeing, before taking illustration contracts creating movie pitches. His style and ability to visualise a universe from a line in a film script ensured Ralph was the perfect person to visualise George Lucas's ideas.

"His imaginative and beautifully produced paintings gave life to the most iconic film of all time," reflects artist Feng Zhu, who studied Ralph's original paintings when working on Revenge of the Sith. "Through his creations, we experienced the grandeur of science fiction on a whole new level."

After the success of Star Wars, Ralph's talent for conceptualising new worlds was in demand at Paramount where he worked on the unreleased film, Star Trek: Planet of the Titans. However, he'd return to the other

StoreMags.com



"Ralph was George Lucas's eyes to visualise the several epic scenes for the first Star Wars. He's an icon in the movie visualisation field. Ralph's technique exhibits a flawless sense of perspective, of scenic scale and exquisitely rendered detail. His work lives on, and so does Ralph in the memory of all who knew him" SYD MEAD

'star' franchise for Star Trek: The Voyage Home. As an indication of how timeless his concepts were, his Planet of the Titans paintings were eventually used for Star Trek III: The Search for Spock, Star Trek: The Next Generation and Star Trek: Enterprise.

A GALAXY OF WORK

Ralph designed the spaceships for the Battlestar Galactica TV series, for Steven Spielberg's Close Encounters of the Third Kind and E.T. Later in 1985 he shared an Academy Award for best visual effects for the film Cocoon. Other film credits include Raiders of the Lost Ark and Jurassic Park.

"At the time, I imagined many of my illustrations would have been considered 'out there,'" said Ralph when he spoke to us about his work, explaining how he would often take inspiration from objects around him. Take the Death Star, which was based on an old photo enlarger he used for painting.

He'll always be remembered for his Star Wars art, and yet Ralph never imagined

Ralph describes the moment his life changed: "I was walking down Hollywood Boulevard and a piece of paper came blowing up the street. I bent down to pick it up and it was a bubble gum wrapper with a picture of Darth Vader on it. I knew at that point I was part of something very special."



RALPH MCQUARRIE

A Tribute 1929 – 2012



"Ralph was a concept artist before anyone knew what that meant. His technical, design and artistic ability from an era before Undo still wows me. His style may feel a bit dated to some, but the images he produced at his peak equal and surpass most of what I see today."

Kevin Jenkins, Framestore



"As a child of the Star Wars generation, it wasn't just his design work that captivated me but his production paintings as well. They appeared everywhere: in magazines, on lunch boxes and as toys. It wasn't until I was older that I realised someone actually did this work for a job and as a teenager who loved to draw it was a revelation. His work was a massive influence for me in pursuing a career as a concept artist."

Paul Dolan, concept artist



"Ralph McQuarrie inspired a whole generation of concept artists and designers, including myself. His visions will life forever! Thank you Ralph!"

Patrick Faulwetter, concept artist



"I was lucky enough to meet Ralph a couple of times while working at Doug Chiang's Iceblink Studios. He struck me as a sincerely sweet and humble guy. He was an immense talent, and a genuine visionary. He was such a beloved and inspirational figure to countless artists, and while he'll be missed, he's left the world with his art and a legacy that will resonate forever."

Colin Fix, LucasArts



"I stared at his paintings for hours and dreamed of following in his footsteps. Although I never met Ralph, his creative energy surrounded us at Skywalker Ranch and continues to do so in my studio today."

Feng Zhu, FZD School of Design



"He both justified and inspired a generation of concept artists, and he demonstrated how essential visual development was for game and movie productions before those industries really knew the role existed. Ralph was a giant, and he'll always be the perfect incarnation of what concept art is all about."

Sparth, art director



"I've been hugely inspired by Ralph's work since I was a kid. I remember studying his Star Wars portfolio for hours. His art will never be forgotten."

Michael Kutsche, concept artist

Ralph's designs altered slightly once on screen, largely due to modelling techniques of the time. Later a series of action figures were released based on Ralph's original designs for characters, such as the Tuskan Raiders seen here.



"I thought I had the best job that an artist ever had on a film, and I had never worked on a feature film before," said Ralph when asked about his time on Star Wars.

his iconic paintings would be seen outside of the film's production. He was working at the front end of something new, in an undefined role largely of his own making. "Ralph McQuarrie not only played a pivotal role in envisioning the original Star Wars trilogy, he also helped define the idea of concept art as a profession," says leading concept artist Sparth.

Ralph was one of the first concept artists. He helped carve out the role for generations of artists to come, including current leaders in the field such as Ryan Church. "Ralph was a huge inspiration to me. His illustrations and work are so strong and iconic to this day, and were the first and most powerfully ingraining pieces of concept art I can remember ever seeing," says Ryan. "I'm certain that I wouldn't be a concept artist had I not been so inspired by his work at a very young age."

His style avoided the gloss and optimism of imaginative art of the time, led by his contemporary Syd Mead. His collision of geometric shapes, muted colours and flat backgrounds evoked places that were used and lived-in. These were gritty, decaying technological spaces that played on latent memories of the Wild West, Japanese folklore and Saturday morning serials.

"When creating sci-fi worlds, one thing that can easily happen is that the artwork



Ralph's work on Star Wars has remained influential. His Hoth paintings were reused as the basis for the planet Orto Plutonia in Star Wars: The Clone Wars.

By the time work began on Return of the Jedi, Ralph's paintings were being put to screen with few changes. For many he's the designer of these iconic worlds.



Ralph had the rare skill of being able to paint a concept and infuse the scene with real mood and feeling.

will appear outdated at some point, but Ralph's art is of an authenticity that's timeless," expresses Michael Kutsche. "Maybe it's because his creations never feel 'designed'. His images make you feel as if these worlds actually exist somewhere."

A TRUE INSPIRATION

More than 35 years later, Ralph's Star Wars paintings are as vital as they have ever been. Work that was only supposed to be seen by an intimate group of people for an exacting purpose has grown beyond its remit. By expanding beyond the confines of production art and taking on a life of its own, Ralph's work proves an inspiration and has an artistic resonance.

"I've been mentoring a 17-year-old budding concept artist for the past few months," says LucasArts artist Colin Fix as he describes Ralph's enduring legacy. "During our first conversation I wanted to gain a better idea of where he wanted to go with his art. I asked him what artists would he most like to emulate. His answer: Ralph McQuarrie."

Beyond the films, Ralph's influence can be seen everywhere; his timeless visions seep into all corners of our consciousness. "His impact has been greatly felt not only in our community of concept artists, but film, sci-fi, video games, comic books, pop culture, the world as a whole," says Colin. "Ralph, without a doubt, has created some of the most iconic visuals of our time."

Ralph McQuarrie may be gone, but he won't be forgotten. His art is as evocative as ever, a timeless muse for generations of artists. Ralph's work will inspire new artists to take up the daily challenge of defining strange new worlds in galaxies far, far away.



"As a result of Star Wars my work has been seen by millions, reproduced the world over and collected in numerous art books. Many artists work their entire lives without such recognition, so I realise how fortunate I am. And I owe it all to Star Wars"

RALPH MCQUARRIE



Image by Luis van Baarle

» LEARN HOW TO DRESS YOUR CHARACTERS

/ B A L L I S T I C /

WWW.BALLISTICPUBLISHING.COM

FANTASY & SCI-FI DIGITAL ART

ImagineFX Workshops

30 PAGES OF TUITION

Advice from the world's best artists









This issue:

72 Produce iconic superhero art
Alex Garner shows how to create a portrait of Wonder Woman for our cover.

76 Create a space wreck at sunrise
Paul Phippen paints a huge, beached space hulk.

78 Create a dynamic comic group pose
Alvin Lee pencils a dynamic comic character collage.

83 First steps with watercolours
Watercolours provide freshness and luminosity, says Terese Nielsen.

84 Make the most of dramatic lighting
Calum Alexander Watt adds a sense of atmosphere to a SketchBook Pro painting.

88 Draw and paint X-Men cover art
Jorge Molina Manzanero reinvents an X-Men character.

94 Compose a game card character
Craig Elliott reimagines World of Warcraft's Lady Sylvanas for Blizzard.

98 Enhance your digital line art
Lois van Baarle shares her favourite line work tips.

ImagineFX.com

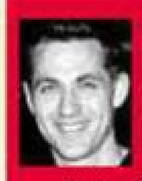
Photoshop

PRODUCE ICONIC SUPERHERO ART

Alex Garner shows how to create a portrait of Wonder Woman, taking it from a simple sketch to a stunning piece of artwork, ready for our cover

Artist PROFILE

Alex Garner
COUNTRY: US



After producing art for Jim Lee's WildStorm Productions and later forming IDW Publishing where he was creative director, Alex Garner became a freelance illustrator and concept artist whose clientele includes Marvel Comics, DC Comics and Blizzard Entertainment.
www.alexgarner.com

Coming up with an iconic comic book cover is a big challenge. I don't mean in the sense that it's a difficult and demanding task (which it can be, of course), but in the respect that you're competing to stand out against every other book on the crowded newsstand. And because of deadlines, it's important to have a step-by-step process you can lean on to facilitate success; a kind of parachute that cushions you from artistic leaps of faith that could fall flat.

This workshop is my parachute. It's ever-evolving, but it shows how I go about producing iconic superhero art: from rough pencil sketches to digital greyscale value studies and then finally to colour application and refinement. You'll see most of the Photoshop tools and techniques I employ that are invaluable in correcting the mistakes I'm prone to make during any given project. And mistakes are a good thing. I've learned a lot more extricating myself from messy situations than when I got it right the first time.

There are a few things to bear in mind about the tools I work with in this workshop: I use Photoshop CS3 with a smidgeon of Illustrator CS3. And if you have absolutely no idea what masks, layers, layer masks, adjustment layers or channels are, then this might come off as pretty confusing because I use all of those. A lot. Even the occasional vector mask. Nevertheless, I'll certainly try my best to clearly explain how I go about using them in the creation of this Wonder Woman cover painting.

1 Eyes on the prize

After a traditional pencil sketch is scanned in, I scale the file down to a much smaller size (72 DPI at around 800-900 pixels tall), which will force me to look at the forest and ignore the trees. In other words, the inability to zoom in will prevent me from getting bogged down with minor details, which are unimportant and potentially detrimental in the early stages. The primary goal here is to focus on the big picture.



2 Introduce noise

I now create random noise as a base over which to paint my greyscale value study. I do this by pasting in a few pieces of my art, arbitrarily flip them, desaturate and then place on top of each other as Overlay layers. Basically, I'm just creating a big mess of shapes. I then add one more Overlay layer on top of that with a circular gradient that's brightest at Wonder Woman's face and darkest at the edges. In the final part of this technique, I flatten those layers and reduce the contrast using a Levels adjustment.



3 Tackle those values

Now I dive into the greyscale value stage. I set the top sketch layer to Multiply and start painting on an underlying layer using a Large Round brush. Again, because of the low resolution of the file, I'm forcing myself at this stage to concentrate on big shapes and how to make the values work together as a whole. I'm planning on introducing two light sources into this painting: one facing front and slightly to the side, and the other an intense rim light from the sun behind her.



PRO SECRETS

Proof your finished art

While it's a good idea to paint in RGB mode, all printing is done in CMYK. So make sure to use Proof Setup>Working CMYK before submitting your work. Bright greens, blues and purples are especially diminished in CMYK mode, so you want to be reasonably certain what you're painting on screen will be printed on paper.

stormags.com

All images TM & © 2012 DC

storemags.com



4 Fearful symmetry

More refinement as I begin to articulate the focal point of the piece, which will be Wonder Woman's head. Fortunately, her dark hair already provides a perfect high-contrast frame around her face with the background sun accentuating it. Still, something's bothering me about her face as I'm painting. It's too much of a straight-on symmetrical shot. Too mannequin-like. Not heroic. Kind of dull. I'm having serious doubts it's going to work...

5 Face transplant

Because it's much more preferable to make major changes early on in the process, I decide to bite the bullet to completely redraw Wonder Woman's face. I go back to the drawing table (literally) and quickly sketch a new face; angling it at a three-quarters view and hopefully adding a bit more character and interest. I scan it in and affix to the rest of her body. It doesn't have to be perfect. My line art never translates to the final painting stages, so there's no point in fretting about the lack of drawing quality.

6 The big picture

Still in low resolution, I work on painting her new face into the greyscale value study. It doesn't take too long and I feel it's now working much better than the previous version. Much more engaging. I then throw in a temporary background and lasso to give me a broad view of how the whole piece will come together. I feel the overall values are looking pretty solid and that means I'm about ready for the masking/colour stage. But before I do that, I increase the image size back to 300 DPI, which is minimum standard print resolution.





7 Mask task

Before jumping into colour, I mask off every distinct colour element: body, cape, hair and so on. So, starting with her body, either using Quick Mask mode or painting within a layer mask, I create a mask that contains all of her without the cape. I then go to the Channels window, right-click the layer mask just beneath the Blue channel (I'm in RGB mode), select Duplicate Channel… and rename it WW. That's one mask completed and saved as a channel. Now I repeat that process for the cape, the background, and so on.

PRO SECRETS

Check your values

After adding colour, you can check the state of your values by using Proof Setup>Custom... >Working Gray. Quickly flip back-and-forth using Ctrl+Y (PC) or Cmd+Y (Mac). I frequently use this since adding or modifying colour can sometimes dramatically change the overall values and focal point.

WORKSHOP BRUSHES

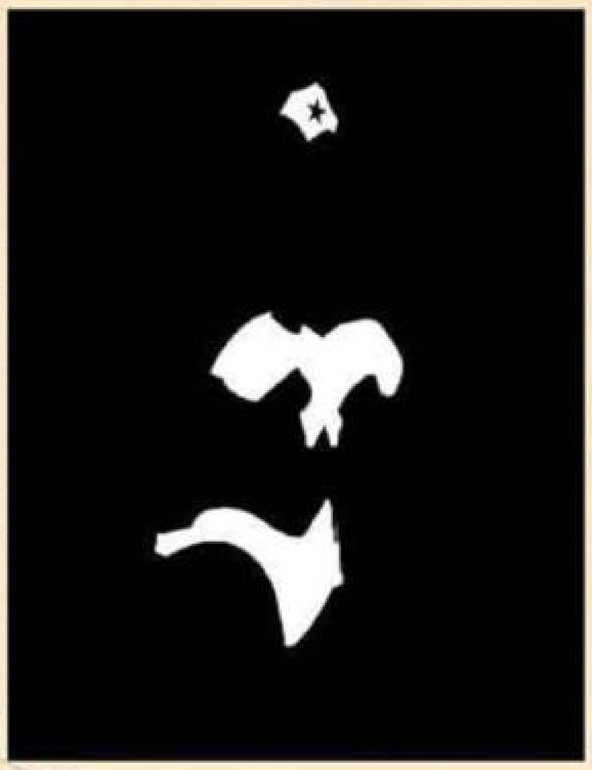
PHOTOSHOP

CUSTOM BRUSHES: ROUND MAIN

This is my primary brush for the majority of the workshop. It can shift from soft blending to a hard edge depending on the pressure.

BASIC BRUSH

I use this a lot for masking and adding subtlety. It's just a good, all-purpose brush.



8 Addition by subtraction

One nice thing about saving all your masks as channels is that after you create a few, you can use Image>Apply Image and set it to either Multiply/Invert or Lighten to add and subtract selections from your other masks. This method is convenient and cumulative: the more masks you make, the easier it is to mask off other sections. And while all this masking seems a bit much, it can ultimately save you time and grant you tremendous flexibility later on, especially if revisions are necessary.



9 Ducks in a row

With every element masked off, it's time to add colour. I begin by creating a new group in the Layers window and naming it Red. I then add a layer mask to this Red group, click Image>Apply Image from the menu, and then add my recently created red mask from the Channels menu. Next I create a Color layer inside the group and fill it in with red. Beneath that red colour layer (still inside the Red group), I add a Levels Adjustment layer to remodify its value, because every colour is distinct in that regard. Once every colour group is set up, I'll have almost endless options for customisation.

10 Get (more) out of Dodge

After the colouring is finished, I add temperature to the piece by placing Color Dodge layers on top of all the colour groups. For this particular piece, I'm opting for a mixture of very warm dodge colours. Now at this juncture, the dodges, the lasso and the sunbeams are just temporary placeholders, only to be added at the very end of the painting stages. I save them for last because they're extremely additive, and it's much easier to ramp up intensity than to dial it down.



11 Grading myself

Now is a good time to objectively assess my progress, so I add a temporary layer at the very top and make notes specifying problem areas that need correcting and setting reminders for what's left to be done. At this point, you can see how much the painting is structurally diverging from the original line art.

12 Crash diet

At this point my Photoshop file is getting pretty bloated. Since I now have a clear view of the final stage ahead, it's time to clean the house. So I transfer all the dodges to a separate back-up file to be applied later and then Flatten the image. Much, much better. Now I can narrow my focus to detail and polish while fixing any structural problems that come my way.



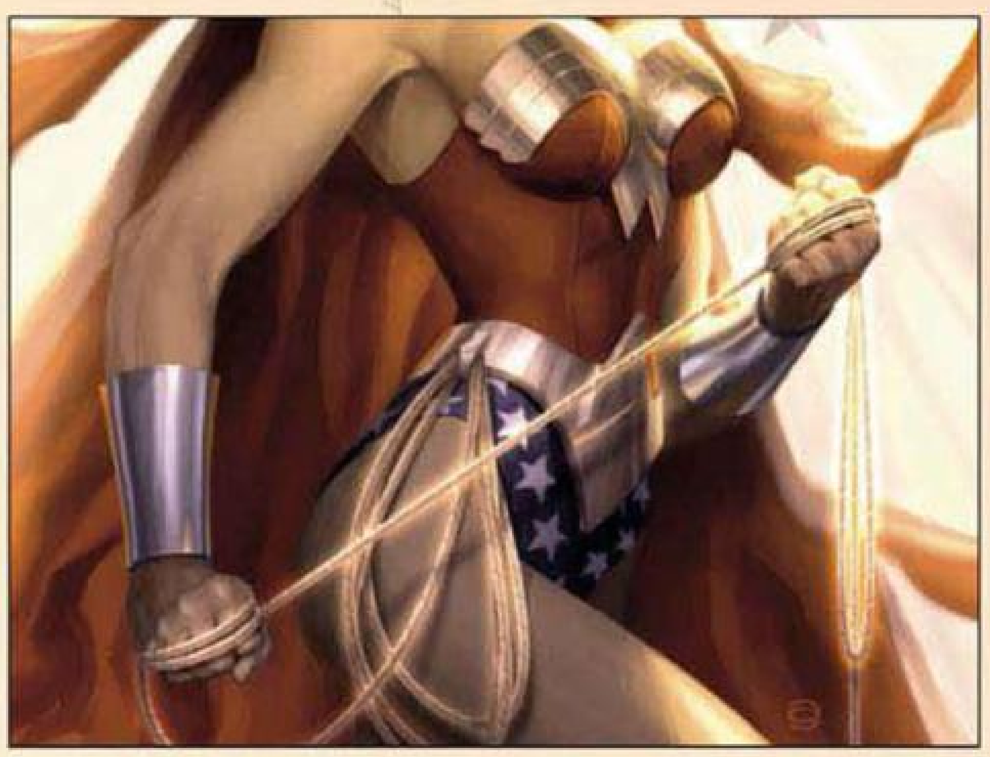


13 Vector nectar

Now that I'm close to finishing the painting, I add the Color Dodges from my back-up file, tweak the Hue and Saturation, and then flatten it again. All that's left is to create Wonder Woman's lasso. Since I want very precise and graceful curves for this, I decide to construct a mask using vectors in Illustrator (note that it can be done in Photoshop as well). The process is pretty basic since it's just a series of stroke-outlined arcs. After it's made, I go back into Photoshop and paste it in.

14 On the home stretch

So now I have an ideal vector-made lasso mask to paint into. And while I rarely use layer effects, the Inner and Outer Glow functions prove very useful for quickly generating a shimmering lasso outline. However, some of these effects can look pretty intense, so you have to be mindful to use them subtly.





15 Finished!

…but after assessing my work a few days later, I expand the top of her head slightly because it looks a bit flat. I also enrich the reds and make a few other tweaks. I realise some of my methodology might seem superfluous, but I believe in versatility and I think this process provides the means to manage a lot of that. And once you get the hang of it, it's not all that difficult or time-consuming. The key is to never stop searching for a better way.

StoreMags.com



Playing with light

The image's luminance comes from the sun reflecting off the ship, the bright oranges and golds of the rust coming to full brightness on the bow, with the sun still beating undiminished on the upper superstructure.

...Painter

CREATE A SPACE WRECK AT SUNRISE

Paul Phippen took inspiration from a real shipwreck to create a huge space hulk that's crash-landed on a beach

Artist PROFILE

Paul Phippen

COUNTRY: England



Paul spent 10 years working full-time in concept art, game design and CG, and contributed to the cult racing hit Re-Volt. He finally finished his epic graphic novel in 2011, after starting it 15 years ago.

www.pecksniffpress.com

Artist insight Create a space wreck

After spending years painting the rich world of imaginary insects for my graphic novel Salsa Invertebraxa, I was yearning to do the opposite and paint something that would dwarf human beings. This conveniently corresponded with the desire to portray a spacewreck.

As I scoured the images of the legendary shipbreakers of India and Bangladesh I chanced upon Andrew Bell's photograph Sunrise on the Beach at Sitakunda, which you can see here: **www.bit.ly/steelbeach**. The scene is lit with a strong low sun behind the viewer, and a deep blue sky spanning a broad empty beach at low tide. This inspired me to design a new scenario where a futuristic industrial craft has crash-landed on a barren landscape. There's no prospect of rescue or hope for the crew. The ship appears to be bathed in its last few moments of glory under the setting sun.

Originally I wanted to put two old survivors in the foreground, to bring a human story into the scene. As the painting progressed this became unnecessary. The ship itself became more fascinating with many hidden mysteries in its various shades of corrosion. Where did the ship come from? What was its purpose? Why did it crash?

Lunar vision

The moon is one of those happy accidents. As I was touching up the sky I just noticed what a great moon shape the Painter cursor made, that it could even be two moons in alignment, an eclipse. An extra bonus was that it conveniently explained the ocean being at low tide.

Beached whale

As the ship took on its final form, it started to resemble a rotting whale carcass among bickering scavengers. I rounded the wing to look fin-like and accentuated the barrel shape of the hull, with bloodlike rusty smears, as though it had been harpooned and left to decay. It's a swansong to a bygone age of elegant space trawling.



How I create... THE SHIP'S RUSTING EXTERIOR



1 The composition

To start the painting, the focus had to be established, the sea horizon cutting the painting in half and the hulk listing unevenly in the centre. I took this further by making the basic shape of the hull very fat and relatively clear of extraneous detail, so that the viewer's eye follows its curves and the light can play around it without interference.



2 Rough sky, rough details

The pencil sketch is done as a layer above a rough sky, which was made using a gradient and then airbrushed in Photoshop. Colour values were taken directly from the reference photograph. In this instance a lot of the final details on the ship were not put in at the pencil stage – instead, they were suggested along with contour lines.



3 The benefits of working on the fly

The masts, engines and surface were fine-tuned as the painting progressed. I've often found that when colour is thrown into the piece, it dramatically affects where the key components should be, so I don't usually make my initial drawings too detailed as elements are often moved or removed.

WORKSHOP BRUSHES

PAINTER

CUSTOM BRUSH: SMEARY PALETTE KNIFE



This gives a nice painterly effect so there's never any doubt that a picture is handmade. Its square profile was perfect for stroking down the layers of plates that form the surface of the craft.

Mixed media & Photoshop

CREATE A DYNAMIC COMIC GROUP POSE

Alvin Lee shows you how he pencils a dynamic comic character collage, moving from a basic concept to finished artwork that's ready for colouring

Artist PROFILE

Alvin Lee
COUNTRY: Canada



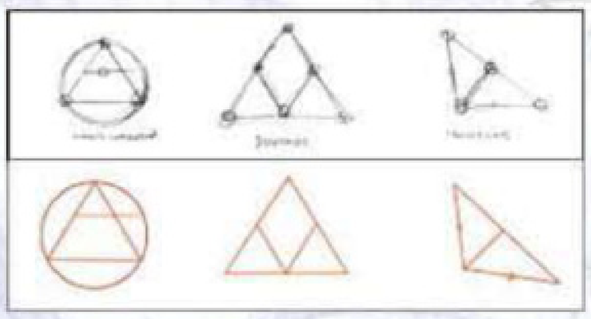
Alvin made his mark in the comics world creating art for Marvel, DC, Image and Udon Comics. He's since moved into video games and multimedia, and teaches for Gnomon Workshop and Schoolism.
www.alvinleeart.com

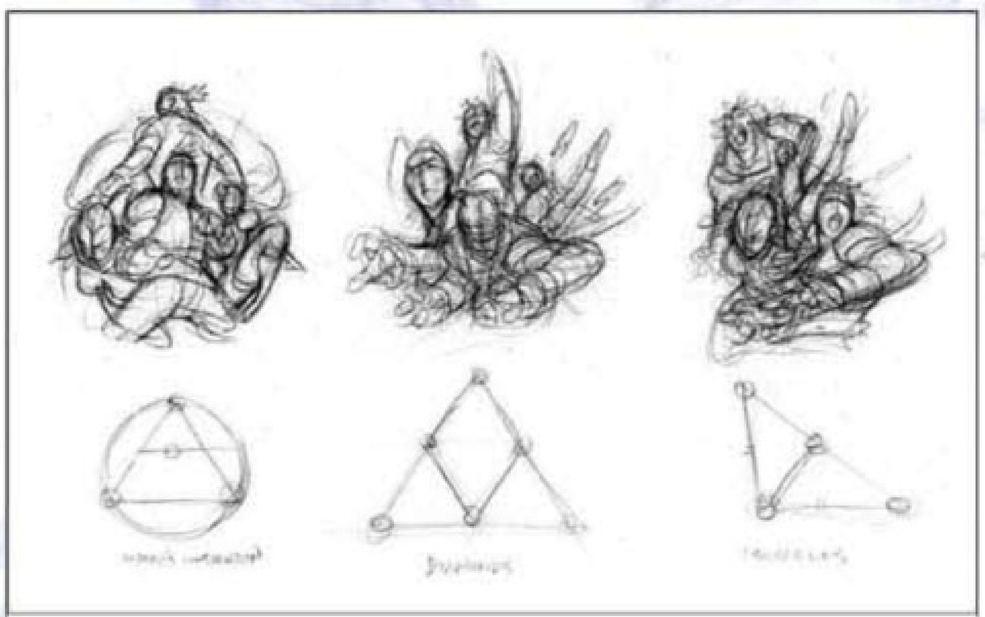
Creating a dynamic comic character collage is actually pretty simple when you attack it with a step-by-step approach. You can go with a more free-flowing method in a sketchbook, but those usually don't work well when placed within specific print formats. It's all about producing an overall shape, rather than throwing building blocks one upon the other aimlessly.

The number of characters there are on the page greatly affects the layout, because certain numbers yield different geometrical patterns. Think of it as putting food on a plate: knowing your entrée, sides and garnishes will assist you in visualising the meal.

Knowing what you'll be using the collage for will also help in the conceptual stage. They're generally ideal for covers or splash pages within a story, because they convey many different occurrences in time in a fun and punchy way. Whether it's a double splash – a two-page layout or wraparound cover – or a single bleed page, the space has to be utilised in an engaging way.

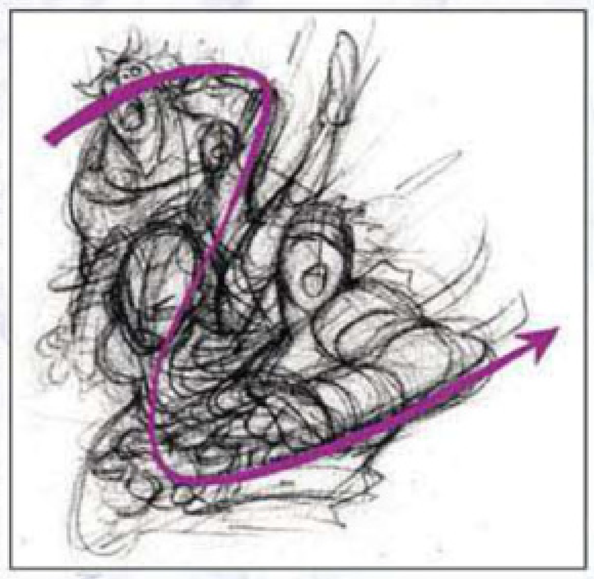
For this workshop I'll be doing a single page full-bleed (or splash) collage, featuring four characters on one 11x17-inch comic book drawing board. Time to roll up those sleeves and start cooking!





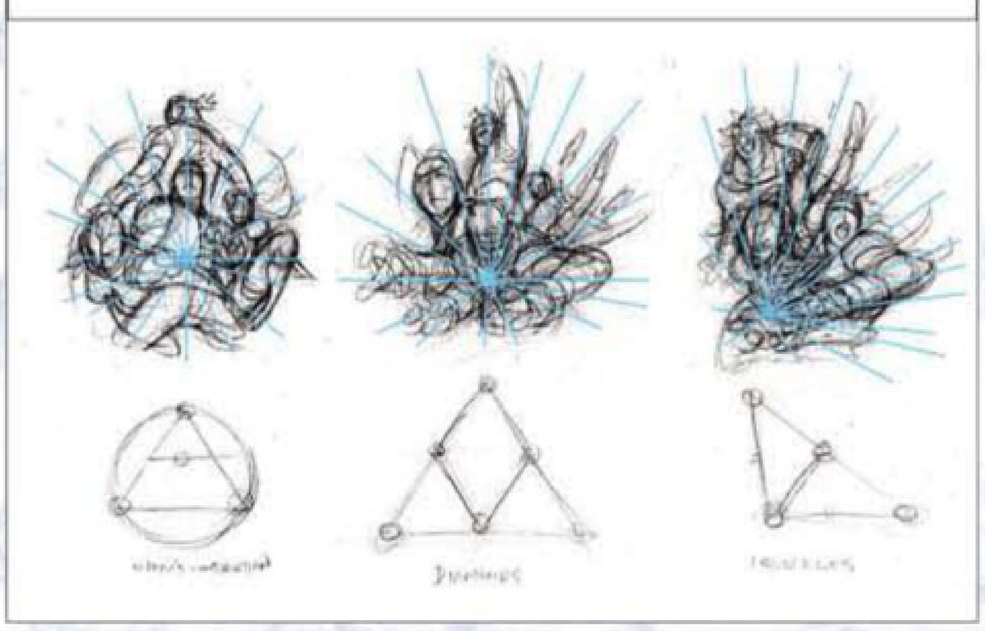
1 Initial geometry

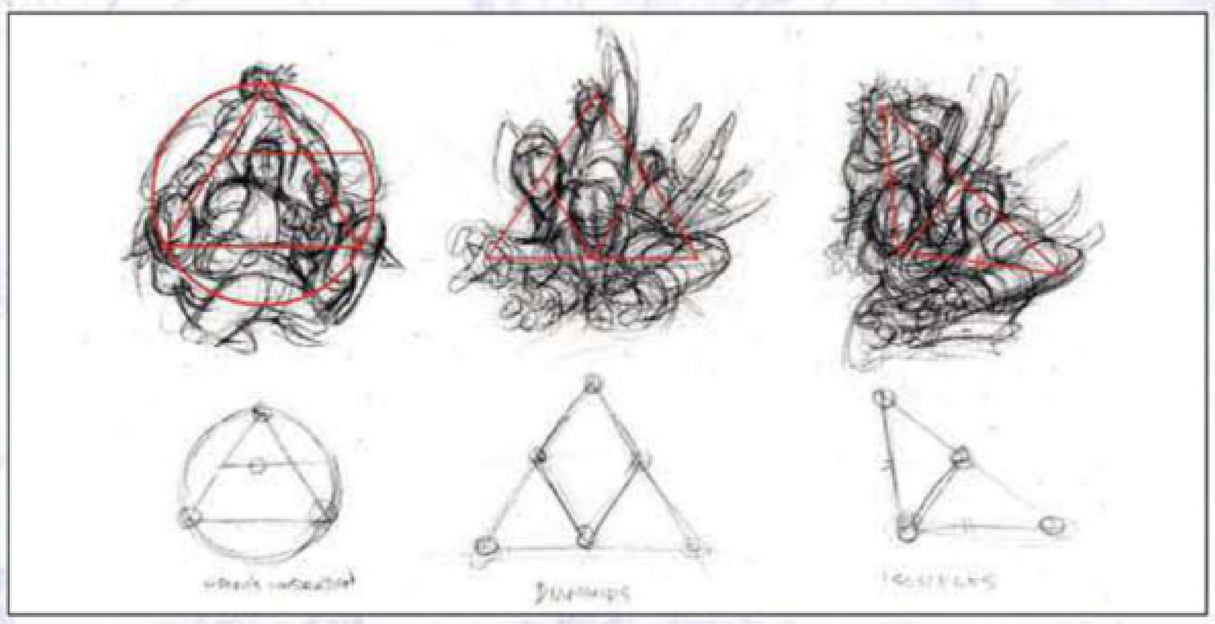
First I determine how to place my characters in the space in an interesting way. Classic cues in geometry usually help in achieving an interesting formation, such as diamonds, triangles, circles or ovals. With circles representing heads I map out my general shape. My feature character – Ryu – should be the star and should be dominant in terms of space and placement. I try to also align the characters or points of interest as closely as possible, following the Rule of Thirds.



2 Thumbnails and perspective

I apply a vanishing point to the image, which enables me to imagine the characters in a 3D space and adds directional lines within the collage to lead the eye. S-shape curves also introduce an interesting flow into the composition. Each character doesn't have to adhere to the same vanishing point, but when they do it generates cohesion within the collage. I make sure all the heads are either looking forward or outwards from the centre of the page: it makes for a more harmonious layout.






ALVIN LEE

Shortcuts

Resize brushes

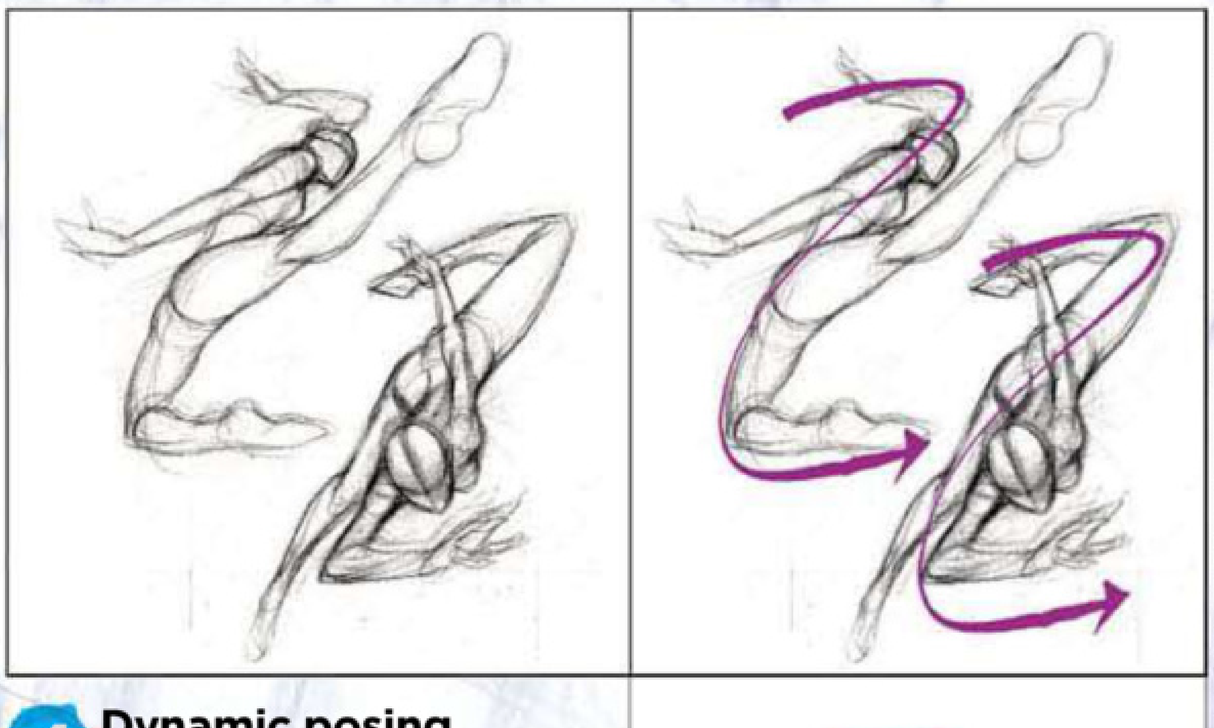
[and] (PC & Mac)

Quickly resize the brush tip in Photoshop using the keyboard, if you haven't already assigned this to your stylus.



3 Draw a larger layout

With my rough thumbnail in mind, I start doing a larger layout, usually no bigger than 13x20-inches. This is done to more clearly determine character sizes, poses, using basic structure and proportions. I keep this stage pretty loose because I'm mostly trying to capture the directional lines, motion or energy within the layout.



4 Dynamic posing

Time for some dynamic poses that complement the directional lines. This involves some general rules: torsion, purpose, silhouette, balance and foreshortening. Shifting the alignment of the shoulders creates torsion. Each pose should demonstrate a purpose. The overall silhouette of the character should utilise the space and directional lines. The character's posture should be balanced. If one limb is forward the opposite limb will usually look better going backwards. I try to have each character have some element of dynamic foreshortening.

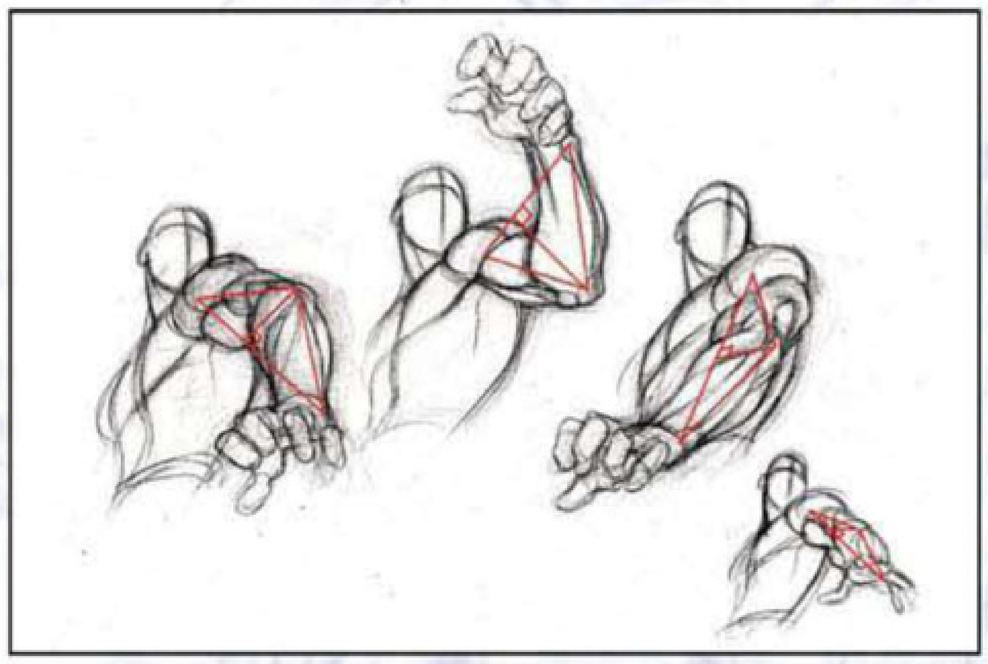
PRO SECRETS

Lighten up

I use a dry matte eraser to lighten my blue pencil before switching over to 2H drafting lead. It's ideal for lightening your work without removing it. This creates better distinction between colours. The blue pencil also becomes easier to remove in Photoshop.

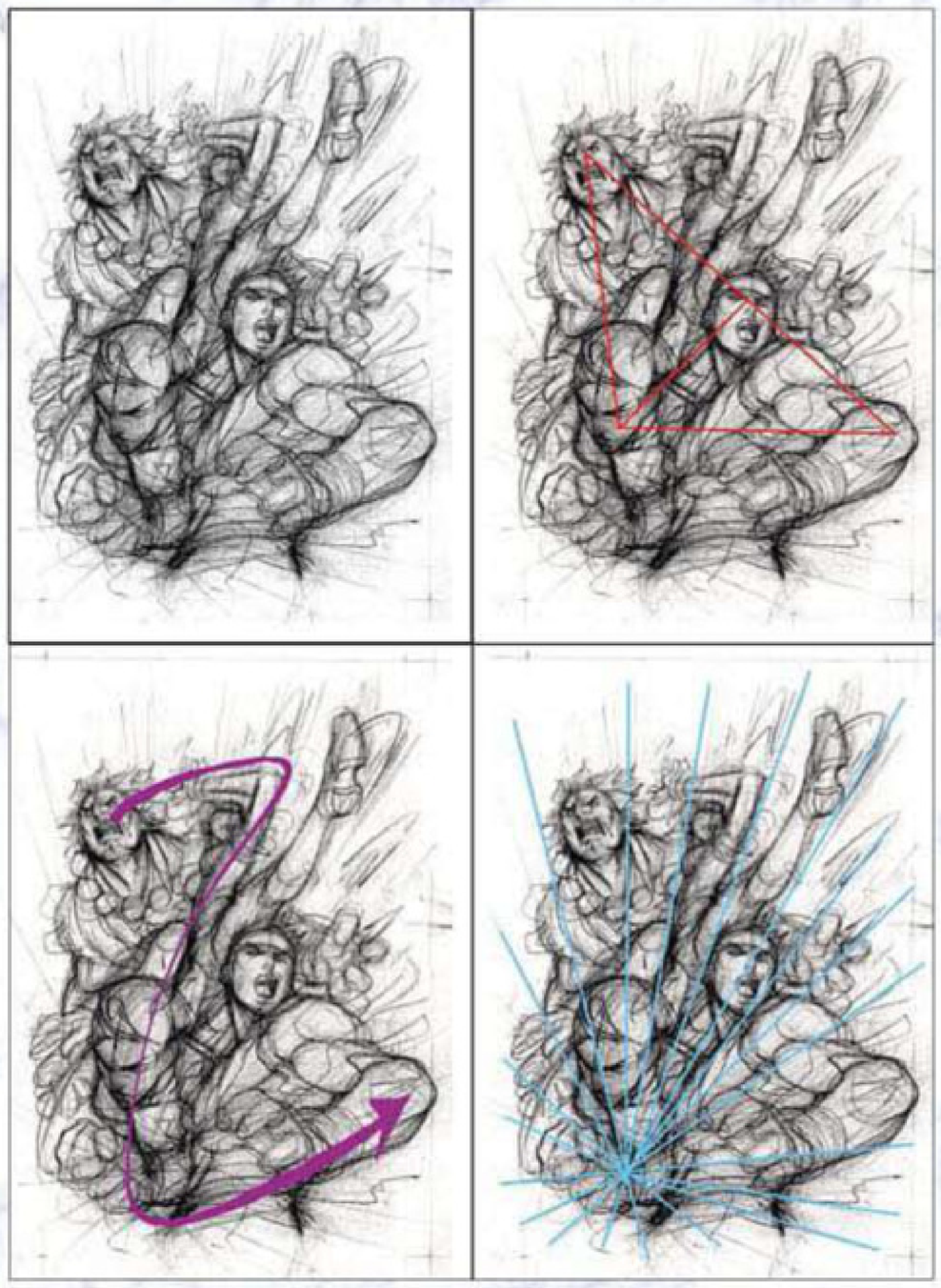
5 Dynamic foreshortening

When using dynamic foreshortening I find that using the existing vanishing point helps in creating motion and unity within the piece, although this doesn't always apply. One trick is to foreshorten a chosen limb towards the camera, which emphasises those directional lines. I often use various isosceles triangles to determine how a limb foreshortens towards the viewer by using right angles to determine where the key joints will lie.



6 Building character structure

I now add all of the necessary structure in basic anatomy and proportions. It doesn't need to be too detailed, but I like to leave no guesswork in the structure. I may even add costumes, facial expressions or props because they might affect the layout. The more leg work I do at this stage the easier my time will be when I begin penciling.



Shortcuts

Go full screen

F (PC & Mac)

Press F for Photoshop's full screen mode, then hold down Space to move around the canvas.



7 Scan and resize on stencil

I scan in my final layout, import it into Photoshop and resize it to fit onto a 11x17-inch comic-book board. I do this by placing the layout onto a stencil I created to mimic the copy, trim and bleed lines. If you need a stencil of your own, create one by scanning the board you intend on using and placing the layout on top using a Multiply layer. You may want to also adjust the brightness/contrast of the layout, so that it'll be more easily visible when printed and eventually traced.



8 Time to break out the blue pencil

Using a coloured pencil to rough in the layout is a traditional way of producing comic book art. You can use a light box, light table or window to trace the layout on to the board. The colour of pencil you choose makes no difference, because any colour can be easily removed in Photoshop as long as you can clearly distinguish your coloured lines from your pencil lines. I prefer Prismacolor's Col-Erase Lightblue.

PRO SECRETS

Smooth out your silhouettes

To further emphasise motion in your characters you can play around with your character outlines or silhouettes. Try unifying your anatomy into one smooth outline in areas you see fit. It creates a streamlined effect that may complement directional lines in your image. I find this technique works best when you use it sparingly on one given side of the character or limb you want to exaggerate.



9 Adding anatomy and refinement

Now that I have my wire frame distinguished I start to refine the anatomy and details of my group shot. This is my favourite part in the drawing process because now it's a matter of making my characters look cool and distinctive, going beyond a simple dynamic collection of people. While you don't need to know every muscle and bone in the human body, I'd say that it's important to study the major muscle groups, or else the smaller muscles and tendons will look out of place.

10 Don't be ambiguous when penciling

During this process I switch to a 2H drafting pencil to refine all of the rough outlines I've established using the blue pencil. This process is a delicate one, because I have to decide which lines I want to keep and which I want to take away. As a comic book penciller there's usually no grey areas in your pencil lines, because you have to expect that your pages will be inked. So you have to define all of your line work in definitive black or white. A sharp lead is key in capturing finer details such as facial features, eyes and hair.





11 Volume and texture

I now have my characters pencilled clearly so I add volume using shadows, cross-hatching or feathered lines. By determining a light source I can drop my shadows into the characters. Each character can have a varied light source, but to keep things consistent and not overly distracting I use the same for all of them. Certain surfaces have particular styles of lines you can use to add more texture, from rough to smooth especially for female figures. Less is often more in this case.



12 Linework and finishes

The general rule of thumb is to create line weights using the same principles as your light source. Lines that are in areas of more light will be thinner. Lines in areas with heavier shadow will be thicker. For a bolder statement you can also outline the silhouette of each character with a much thicker stroke, leaving the lines within thin strokes, creating contrast. As a finishing touch, I add flower petals to contrast the aggressive nature of the piece and to further emphasise the energy flow.



PRO SECRETS

Use yourself as reference

When I'm having trouble with facial expressions, anatomy or a pose I'll use a mirror to try out different body shapes until I find something that works. Have a friend take a photo for you if you don't have a mirror handy. If you can't find a friend then you can also use the web camera on your computer.

13 Removing blue pencil

Removing blue lines is easy in Photoshop. Scan in your pencil drawing in full colour, 300 DPI. Under the top menu select Image>Adjustments>Hue/Saturation. Under the Master drop-down menu select the colour you wish to remove. Pull the Saturation levels fully left towards the grey. Then pull the Lightness levels fully right towards the white. Repeat this process for the other colours you want to remove. I always remove all of them until the bottom colour bar only shows white. Then I convert the image to Grayscale mode.

Shortcuts

Zoom

Ctrl and – or + (PC)

Cmd and – or + (Mac)

Zoom in and out of the page in Photoshop.



14 Adjust levels in Photoshop

The image now should be purely greyscale, but it'll probably look faint because the levels have not been adjusted yet. I bring out the contrast by selecting Image>Adjustments>Levels. Under Input Levels, I drag the black and grey tabs towards the right to bring more of those levels into the image, and drag the white tab to the left to brighten the white levels. The aim is to see the line work clearly while not having too much noise in the white areas.



15 Cleaning up the artwork

In most cases some areas of grey patches will still be left behind. This is because some of the coloured lines probably smudged with the pencil. To remove them quickly I select the Dodge tool. Under the tool's settings I select Range and pick Highlights. I set Exposure to 20 per cent and use the brush to remove areas that have patches of grey. I save the file and call it a day.

Storemags.com

Traditional skills

FIRST STEPS WITH WATERCOLOURS

Watercolours can be tricky at first. However, **Terese Nielsen** shows how their transparency provides freshness and luminosity

With this transparent medium, light reflects off the white of the paper and bounces up through the colours, giving it a glow all of its own. Watercolour can have wonderful results, but it's a tricky medium to master.

As with some other painting media, because of the transparent nature of watercolours, you can't paint light areas over dark ones. The solution is to plan ahead and determine which areas will be lightest. This could include masking them off with tape, frisket or liquid frisket.

When choosing paints, Windsor & Newton sets are widely used, but if you plan on getting serious about the medium then choose tubes with higher pigmented, intense colours and select a warm and cool version of each colour.

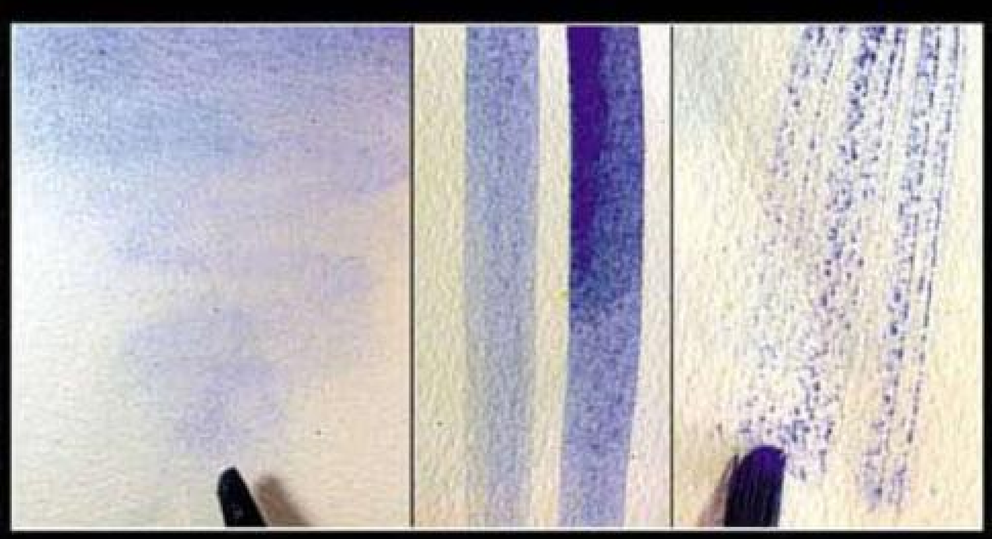
1 Materials and supplies

Though it can be tempting, don't skimp on brushes – you'll soon regret it. Cheap brushes tend to drop hairs into your paintings, splay open and won't come to a fine point at the tip. Choose flat brushes to wet the paper down, and rounds for finer details. A 12x16-inch palette has space for at least 20 colours and room for mixing in the middle. Heavier paper from 140-300gsm won't wrinkle.



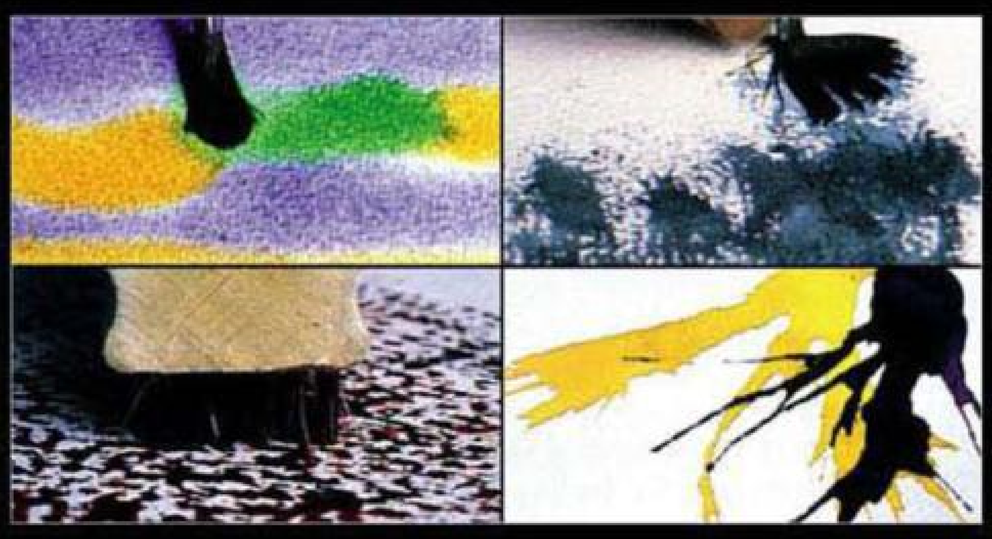
2 How to begin the painting

To begin, draw a light pencil sketch on your paper. Work from the underlayer through to the top layer, from wet to dry. Start by laying in background colours on wet paper (wet-into-wet), keeping it fairly light. The paint dries lighter than it looks when wet. Next, apply wet brushwork over the dry underpainting (semi-wet), and finally details, using the dry brush and other techniques.



3 Play around with various techniques

Have fun exploring and trying new things. Ultimately they'll enable you to describe your subject visually in ways that add diversity through textures, edge control, colour and strokes. Vary your brushes, experiment when mixing colours, apply the paint in different ways and see what happens when the paper is more or less wet. All of these produce different effects.



Artist PROFILE

Terese Nielsen
COUNTRY: US



Terese graduated from Art Center College of Design and has freelanced for 20 years illustrating for comic books, Lucas Entertainment, book covers and gaming art.
www.tnielsen.com

WATERCOLOUR TECHNIQUES



Just add bleach
Mixing bleach into your paint will produce a blotchy effect, as it fights with the pigment.



Spatter with toothbrush
Use a toothbrush to create a spray/splatter effect. Vary the distance from the paper.



Water drops on dried paint
Adding water to dry watercolours lifts and redistributes pigment, creating contours.



Masking out
Apply tape and liquid masking products to retain lightness. Remove when paint's dry.



Scratching away
Try scraping painted areas away to introduce gritty marks and lines.



The end of the brush
Use the brush's butt end to spread thick lines of wet paint in an unusual way.



Salt sprinkle
Toss salt onto wet paint for an interesting effect, as the crystals dissolve and reform.

SketchBook Pro & Photoshop

MAKE THE MOST OF DRAMATIC LIGHTING

Calum Alexander Watt enhances and adds atmosphere to a SketchBook Pro painting with the help of Photoshop's powerful adjustment layers

Artist PROFILE

Calum Alexander Watt
COUNTRY: England



Calum's a freelance storyboarder, concept artist and illustrator working in the entertainment industry. He's created concepts for Disney and Sega, and his comic work has appeared in 2000 AD and Image Comics.
www.bit.ly/calumwatt

I started using SketchBook Pro with a tablet PC a few years ago. The excellent navigation tools along with the simple but powerful brush engine make for a fantastic 'natural' digital drawing experience. I now use a Wacom Cintiq and continue to use SketchBook Pro to draw and paint all my artwork. From a quick sketch to a full-blown concept piece, it's now an essential part of my creative process.

That's only half the story. Once I'm done in SketchBook Pro, I drop the image into Photoshop to add dynamic lighting, atmosphere and mood using adjustment layers. These are an excellent way of grading and adding punch to your work. Photoshop has become a post-production tool for me, much as it is for 3D artists.

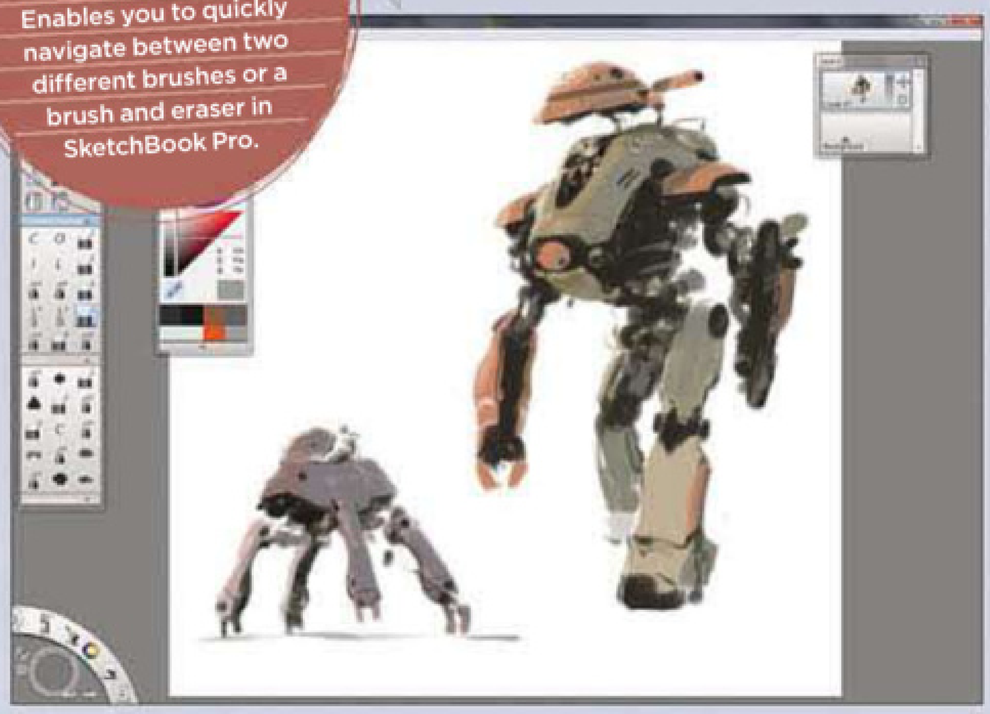
This workshop will outline how I apply these adjustments to a straightforward SketchBook Pro painting, adding atmosphere and mood and even how experimenting can create fantastic and unexpected results.

SketchBook Pro isn't essential for this workshop, but Autodesk offers a trial, which is well worth a look. The program's certainly changed my approach to art.

1 Sketch exploration

I draw some loose colour pieces in SketchBook Pro. I'm exploring shape and form, and through this I find new ideas and start to think about how the final image may play out. I'm sketching on a 2,000x2,000px document, which gives me enough resolution to draw and enables me to work quickly. I'm using my Standard paint brush: it has a sharp fall-off that makes it possible to block in large areas with heavy pressure, yet draw tiny details with slight pressure. The scale and positioning of the character to the mech is interesting, and some narrative can develop from this. The canvas is now the correct dimensions and resolution for the final image. I've duplicated and hidden the sketch layer, and keep this in reserve as I check my progress.

Shortcuts
Swap tools
S (PC & Mac)
Enables you to quickly navigate between two different brushes or a brush and eraser in SketchBook Pro.

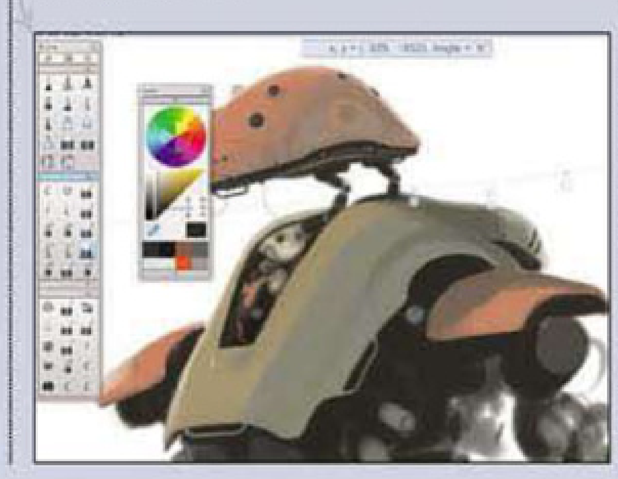


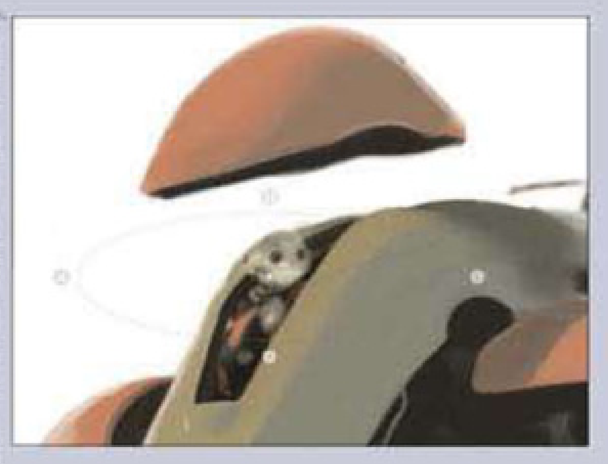
2 Define and refine

I start to paint over my original. SketchBook Pro has some great tools, including some I find invaluable now. The Ellipse tool (E) enables me to draw perfect circles and ellipses while keeping my brush properties intact, including a stroke's softness and fall-off opacity. This is useful for keeping all aspects of the painting natural and consistent.

3 Keeping straight

As with the Ellipse tool, the Ruler tool (R) is great for creating straight lines while keeping the fall-off and values of your brushes. I'm using both tools to create shapes and details on the mech. These tools can also be used for creating construction lines, perspective fall-off and guides. This mech is intended to be a fairly loose affair, but maintaining straight lines is always useful! For quick work, pressing Shift when drawing forces a straight line either horizontally or vertically, while holding down D creates a diagonal line.





4 Introduce details

I'm using the Large Round brush to help blend the surface forms. I sample the painting by pressing Alt to blend the colours. The Standard brush is great for detailing and blocking out, but certain surfaces need more gentle care! SketchBook Pro's brush engine is simple, yet has a host of options for precise control of the stroke. Once the body has been formed I can add the details: sensors, rivets, venting and so on. These add interest to the surface and create a sense of realism. I revert back to the Standard brush for these areas of interest.



PRO SECRETS

Lifestyle

It's good to hint at scale and purpose by incorporating the human element when designing objects and vehicles. It aids the reader in understanding the piece and can give depth to a concept. You could add in a quick silhouette of a figure, but including a figure in the overall composition gives more satisfying results.

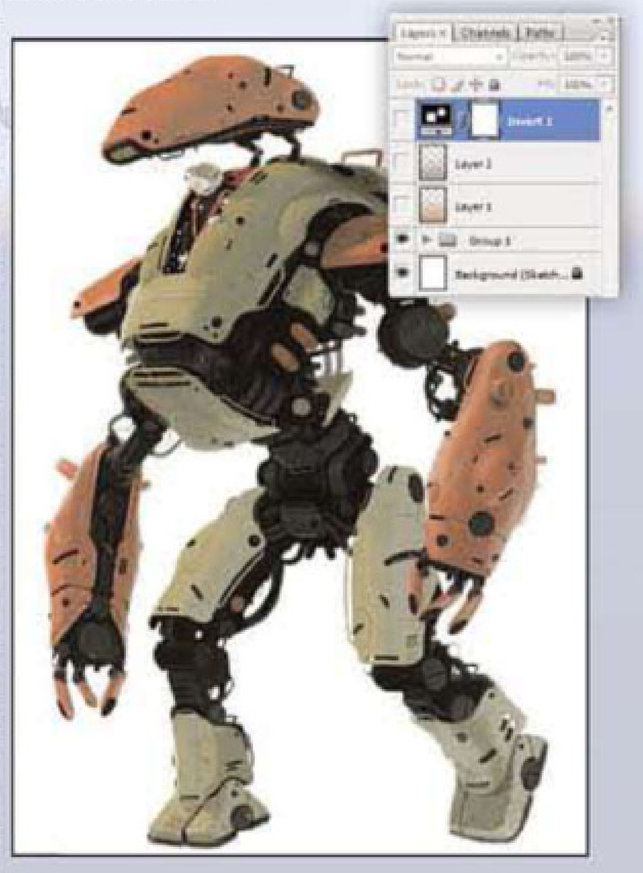
5 Forms and silhouettes

I use an eraser almost as much as a brush when painting. Here the Standard Eraser has the same properties as the Standard brush. I nibble away at the edges, resolving the form and creating cut-out areas that help define the mech's silhouette. I flip between the brush and eraser by pressing S, which swaps between the last two used brushes. This is a quick way to work without hunting out different keys. Silhouette is very important here: I make sure the large areas are readable and clear to the viewer, yet contains enough noise to add detail and interest.



9 Into Photoshop

I've exported the SketchBook Pro file as a Photoshop file, which retains the layers I've been working with in SketchBook. Once into Photoshop I begin by working with Adjustment layers, starting with Levels. This helps to heighten colour and dynamics in the image. I add a couple of layers with gradients: this mech is in the desert and the lighting will be dark, so I want to make sure he doesn't appear to be floating above the sand.



WORKSHOP BRUSHES

PHOTOSHOP

CUSTOM BRUSH: PS_RUST_BRUSH



With its hand-drawn texture, this is a useful brush for creating dirt and rust, or for erasing to give scratches and wear.

SKETCHBOOK PRO

CUSTOM BRUSHES: SBPRO_STANDARD



I use this brush to block in large areas with hard pressure, and minor details with slight pressure.

SBPRO_STANDARD_ ERASER



This has the same settings as my Standard brush. It's great for removing whole areas of cutting in fine details.

SBPRO_LARGE_SOFT



I use this brush to smooth out large areas where I need a soft transition in light. It's also great for sketching.

6 Evaluate my progress

One of the benefits from painting straight out is the accidental forms that can come about. Sometimes I realise down the line that some shapes don't work so well. I've redrawn the head and legs because they didn't feel dynamic or interesting enough.



7 Colour definition

Now that the silhouette has changed there's a crossover of the arm and leg. I've a good idea that the lighting I'll add in Photoshop will be quite diffuse, so I paint in the finger-ends to help define the arm in front of the leg.



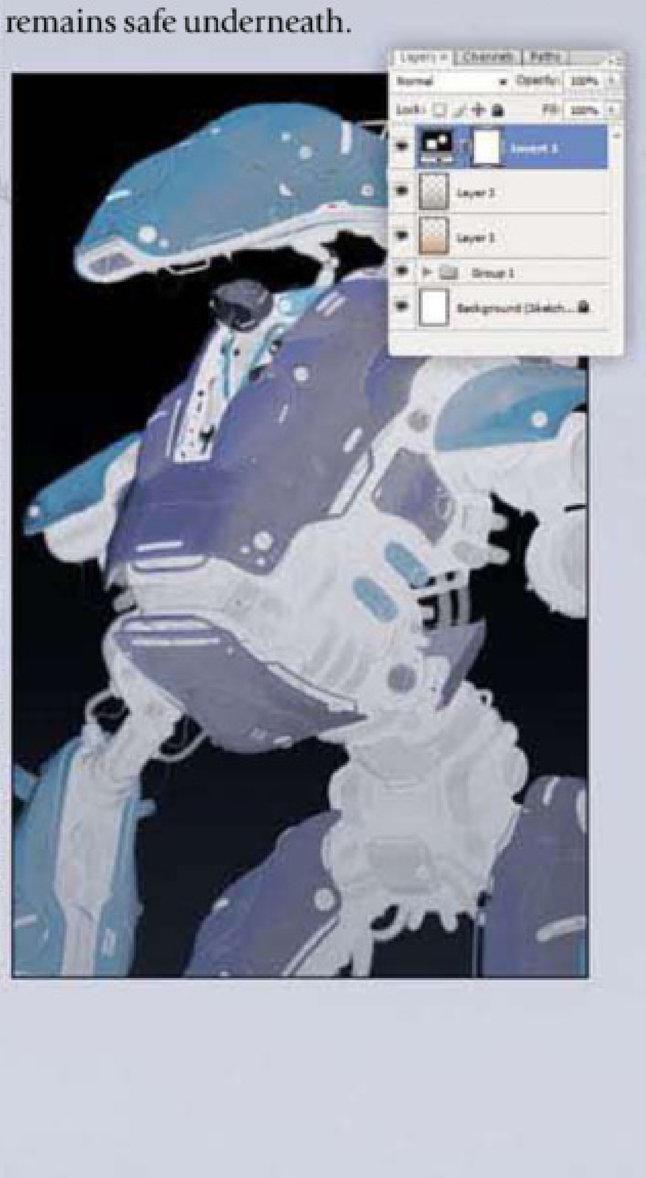
8 Focus and narrative

The real focus of this will be the pilot. He'll define the scale and purpose of the piece. While I try to keep layers to a minimum, it helps to add details in new layers. The pilot layer is above the mech body, but under the head and cable layers.



10 Adjustment layers

I continue to add adjustment layers and gradients. Interesting colours and lighting can come from mixing and experimenting with these. Here I add an Inverted layer. I apply it as a Color Burn blend mode. I try to experiment by combining different layers. The great part is that my original image is unaltered, so if I decide these layers aren't working I can delete or alter the settings – my painting remains safe underneath.



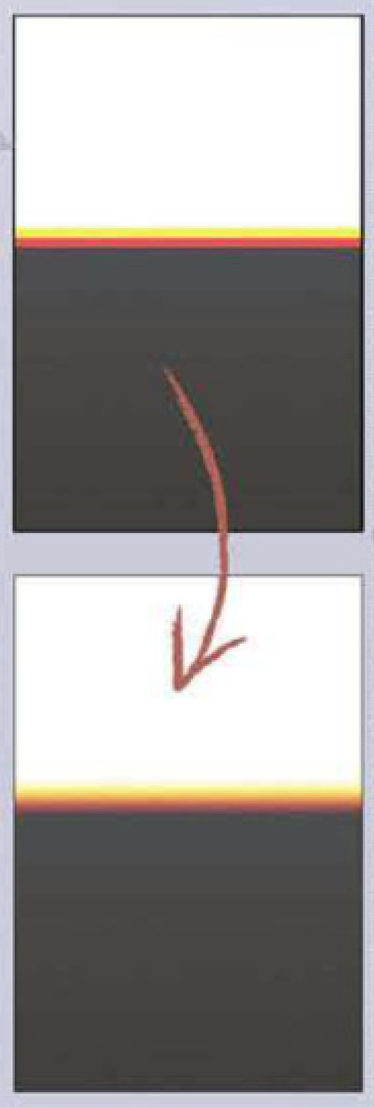
11 Gradient banding

Because of the gradients and the Adjustment layers, suddenly we have an interesting result. To me this looks like a desert plain with a sunset/sunrise. This is down to the bit depth of the working file. Eight bits is usually enough for a digital painting, but when using high contrasts and gradients, banding can appear: the yellow and red stripes here are a happy result of this. I need to keep the effect, so for now the image will remain eight-bit.



12 Masking technique

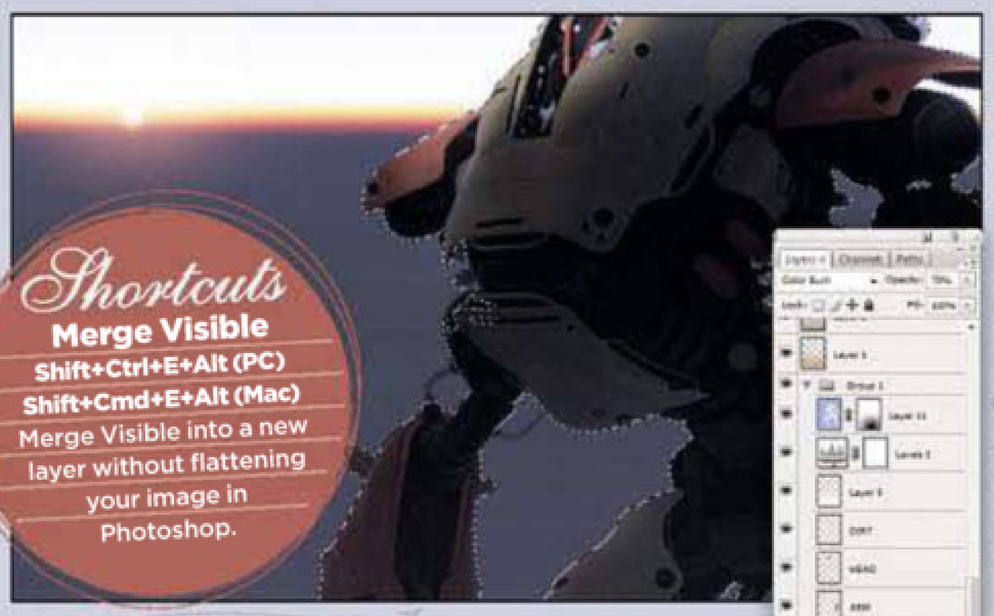
I really like the effect, but it'll need work to make it feel more realistic. I hide the mech group, select the top layer and merge the visible layers into a new layer (Shift+Ctrl+E+Alt). This retains all the working layers beneath without flattening the file. I apply Gaussian Blur to the layer – just enough to blend the bands of colour together. Already this is a more convincing horizon: there's a good deal of dust in the air. Great, this is a desert! I need to add a layer mask so we can see the mech beneath. I Shift+Ctrl-click the layers of the mech to make a selection, and with the horizon layer selected I click the Make Layer Mask button from the bottom of the layer palette. This automatically creates a new mask on the layer with the area of the mech masked out. Then I invert the mask (Ctrl+I) and the mech pops through!



PRO SECRETS

Rework

Don't be afraid to redo if you're not happy with part of your work. You may have spent time on a certain area, but if it isn't working, it isn't working! Perhaps concentrate on another area for a while and then come back to the problem area. Digital working allows for reworking without too much stress. In the end you'll be glad of the extra effort and more satisfied with the final image.



Shortcuts

Merge Visible

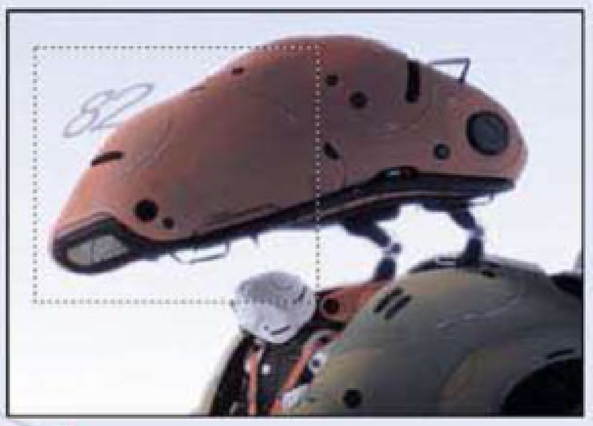
Shift+Ctrl+E+Alt (PC)

Shift+Cmd+E+Alt (Mac)

Merge Visible into a new layer without flattening your image in Photoshop.

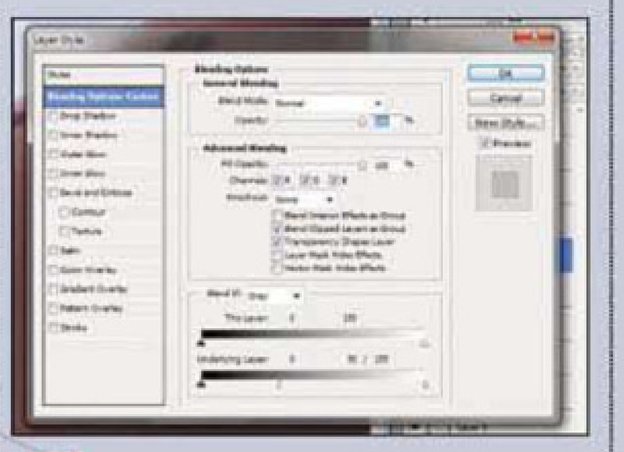
13 Blend modes

I add in a sun and a glow. I start by airbrushing a small dot of red. Then I set the Blend mode of the layer to Colour Dodge, duplicate and apply a Gaussian Blur to the dot. I then scale the blurred dot to give the impression of sunlight spilling over the desert plain.



14 Text tools

The mech needs more details, something to add extra depth to its character. I start to add logos by creating a simple ident with the text tool. Getting the right font is essential, so I search the web for sites that offer free fonts. I recommend ignoring most fonts that come supplied with your computer! For the hatch of the mech I rasterise the number and then use the Spherize filter to bend it over the surface (Filter>Distort >Spherize>Mode:Normal).



15 Blending options

Text can feel stark against a painted image, so I double-click the text layer and tweak the Blending Options, fading the text into the paintwork. Using Alt splits the blend arrows for fine tuning. Here, the 82 logo fades off into the light that spills over the mech's hatch. This helps to ground the graphics into the scene. These settings can be pasted between layers: right-click Layer>Copy Layer Style>Select new layer>Paste Layer Style.



16 Generate logos

Adding logos and idents can give a piece real character. I open up Illustrator and start creating some graphics using more text and simple shapes. Illustrator has no real screen resolution, so my graphics can be scaled and transformed without loss in clarity. As with my painting, I like my graphics to evolve as I create. New ideas and forms present themselves as I construct the pieces.



17 Graphic details

I copy and paste these into Photoshop from Illustrator and use similar warping and layer blending to the text (see step 15). I assign these and the text to a single group (Shift+select desired layers>Ctrl+G), and then add a layer mask to the group. Now I brush away the idents to give them wear and age. This appears to show scratches and aging on the graphics – perhaps the desert dust has worn these away over time? I use a custom made brush (Rust Brush) to nibble away at the graphics. By using a layer mask, I can eraser or paint back in the graphics without destroying them permanently.

18 Bit depth

My working file has been in 8-bit. While this gave me the great idea for the skyline, it also creates these bands of colour. I duplicate the image and before flattening, convert the whole file to 16-bit. This increases the file size, but gives for a much smoother transition in gradients. When flattened these smooth transitions remain and the bit depth can be reduced again if needed.





19 Final comparison

Side by side it's clear to see how Photoshop's powerful adjustment layers can really make a dramatic difference to a simple concept piece, adding light, mood and context. For a simple concept piece the original was fine, but with dramatic lighting via the Adjustment layer I've given the mech a purpose and character.

Photoshop

DRAW AND PAINT X-MEN COVER ART

Jorge Molina Manzanero explains how he reimagines a character from the X-Men stable so that it grabs the viewer's attention from the get-go

During my first years as an artist I was very much a fan of painting traditionally. I refused to turn digital because I felt real artists don't need help from computers. However, as I became more involved in the industry I grew more comfortable with computers, because they speed up the painting process and nowadays over 50 per cent of my work is digital. I've produced my fair share of traditional art to the point where I don't need to prove to myself that I can do it. At the end of the day I have to find the fastest way to produce decent-quality illustrations. The evolution of technology means artists have more options at their fingertips for bridging the gap between traditional and digital art. During this workshop I'll be explaining my work process, which I've developed over the years. There are many ways to achieve the same result, but this is the way that I feel suits me better.

Of course, nothing is set in stone and if you have a different way to do a certain step, feel free to do so. The idea is to make you a better artist, not by following commands but by incorporating new elements into your work process.

Artist PROFILE

Jorge Molina Manzanero

COUNTRY: Mexico



Jorge works on video games, comics and product design. He recently got an illustrator contract with Marvel Comics.

www.zurdom.com

1 Initial sketches

I produce two quick sketches of the X-Men character Blink using the Molina-sketch brush, with 100 per cent Opacity and 100 per cent Flow. This brush isn't good for detailing, so it forces you to stay broad with your drawing. When sketching I always go from general to specific, from big shapes to details. I focus on portraying the character in a dynamic pose, keeping a simple but balanced composition. Once the sketches are done I look for an explosion image online, for a background image, to give the editor an idea of the whole composition.







2 Pencilling in

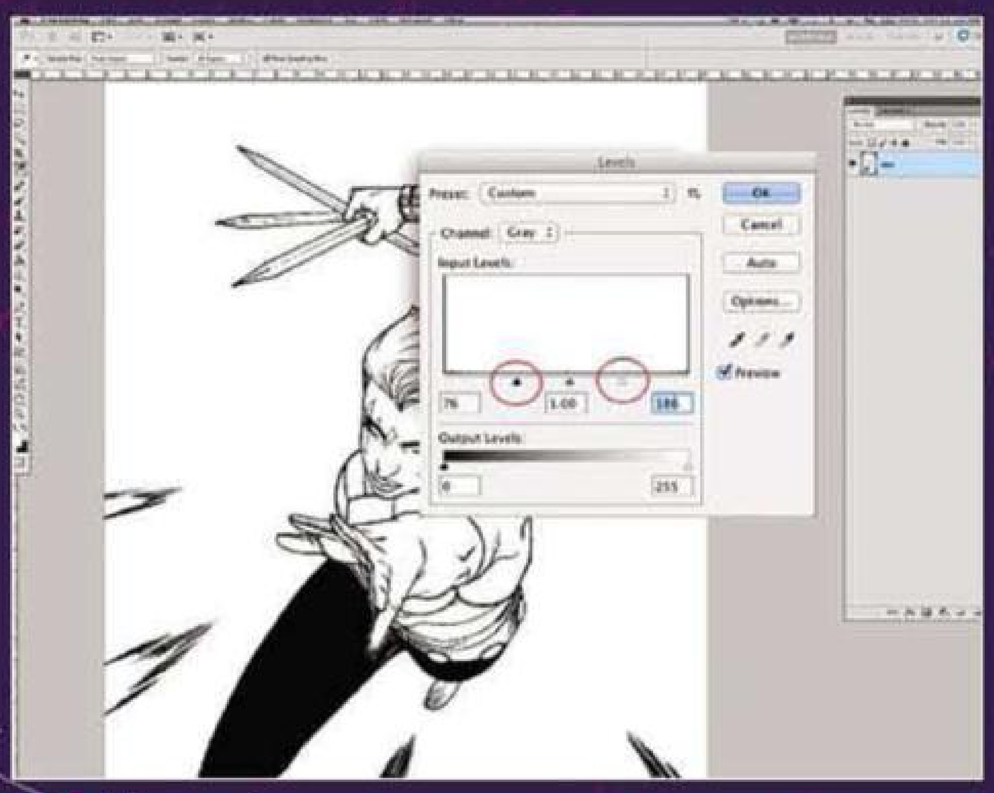
Once the sketch is approved, I start the digital pencil process. I set up an 11x17-inch, 300 DPI resolution canvas and use the Molina-hard edge brush, with 100 per cent Opacity and 50 per cent Flow. I import the sketch and reduce the Layer Opacity to 30 per cent. Then I create a new layer above the sketch layer and refine the sketch with cleaner traces, mainly focusing on the character proportions, anatomy and structure. I keep my pencils relatively loose and don't focus much on line quality and clean strokes because I'm going to refine my lines at the inking stage.

All images TM & © 2012 Marvel



3 Inking in

I print a copy onto regular paper and paste it onto Bristol board. Then I start inking, using a light table to trace my print along with a Staedtler stylograph and a fine liner pilot. I then scan the image at 300 DPI in Grayscale mode, before importing the inks to Photoshop, naming the first layer 'inks' and cleaning the image and fix the levels to eliminate any errors or scratches. Once I have my inks balanced I convert them to CMYK, in readiness for the colouring process.



4 Line art

But just before going into colouring, I do a little trick that enables me to colour my ink lines to bring the image together. It takes a bit of time to get right at first, but once I get the hang of it it becomes automatic. I go to Channels; the menu is usually next to the layer, but you can find it by going to Window>Channels, and I click the CMYK layer, to selects all my blacks. Once the line art is selected I go back to Layers and create a layer on top of my inks layer. Then I create a Layer Mask, press Ctrl+I and erase the ink layer.

WORKSHOP BRUSHES

PHOTOSHOP

CUSTOM BRUSHES: MOLINA-SKETCH BRUSH

This is my favourite brush that I use it for sketching and also for some speed paintings. It's great for blocking in shapes and laying tones in a broad way. I don't recommend it for detailing.

MOLINA-SOFT EDGE BRUSH

I tend to use this brush for the final process of my illustrations. I find it's great for adding lighting effects and smooth surfaces.

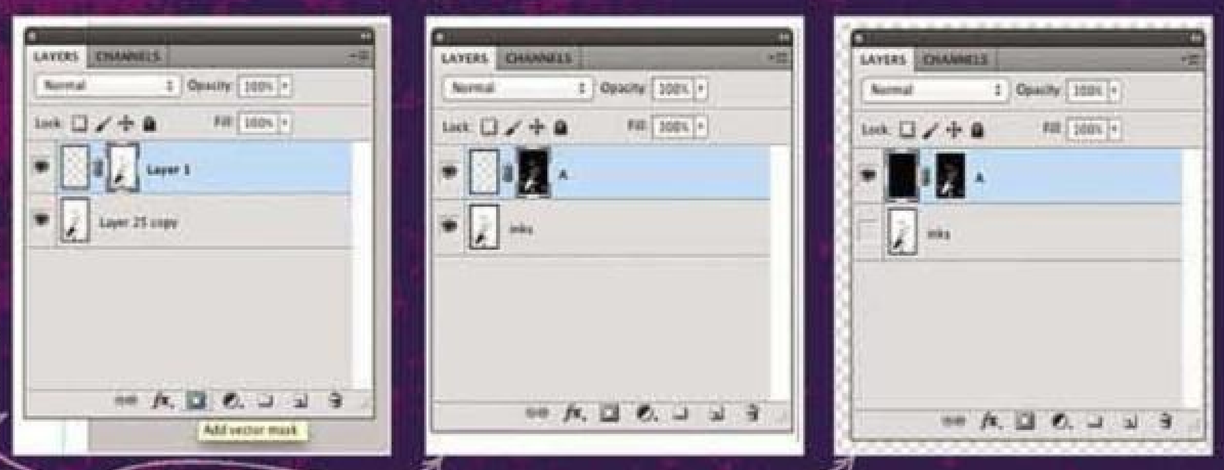
SPARK BRUSH

As the name says, I use this only to paint sparks. Just add some layer modifications to have a play around with the glowing effects.

PRO SECRETS

Eliminate errors

During the pencilling process I do a lot of a horizontal flipping of the image (Edit>Transform> Horizontal flip). This helps to find errors that usually aren't seen. I suggest doing this many times to keep a good structure and symmetry to your work.



5 Colour preparation

I select the Fill tool and select black. Then I click the empty canvas: the whole inking now reappears without the whites. I name this layer 'inks', create a layer underneath it and fill it with white. I ensure All Layers mode is unchecked and the Anti-alias and Contiguous modes are checked. I call this layer 'BG', for background. Now if I brush over the inks layer, my line art should be painted by the chosen colour.

Shortcuts

Find the layer

Ctrl+Shift+click (PC)

Cmd+Shift+click (Mac)

If my window is getting very busy, I use this to quickly find the CMYK layer.



6 Colouring

I select the BG layer and try to simulate the explosion effect with brushes, using pink and blue tones. To create the sparks I set up a new layer above the BG layer and use the spark brush to cover the background. To create glowing sparks I launch the Layer Style dialog. Then I check Outer Glow, go to Preferences and in Blend mode check Lighten, then select a tone for the spark's aura. In the Elements area, I alter Spread and Size to achieve the right spark effect. I select all the layers of the background – this will unite all the BG layers.

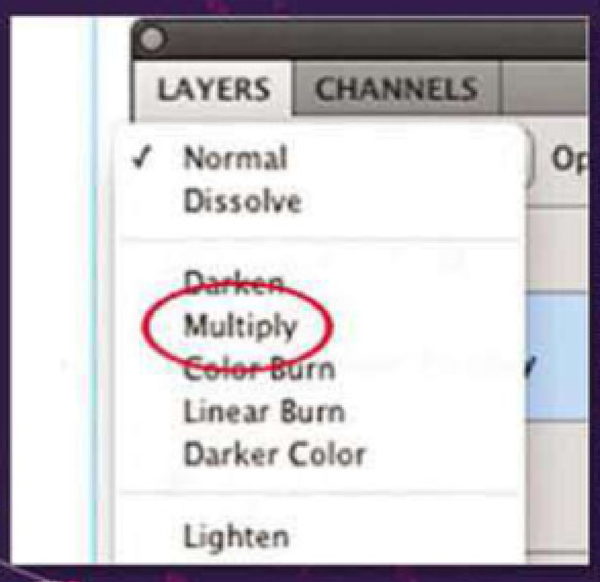


7 A bit of a blur

Now I make a blur effect to give the image greater dynamism. I duplicate my background layer, then go to Filter>Blur>Radial Blur, select Zoom and Best Quality, then hit OK. When I'm happy with the result, I merge both BG layers. I only have two layers now: the BG layer and the inks layer on top.

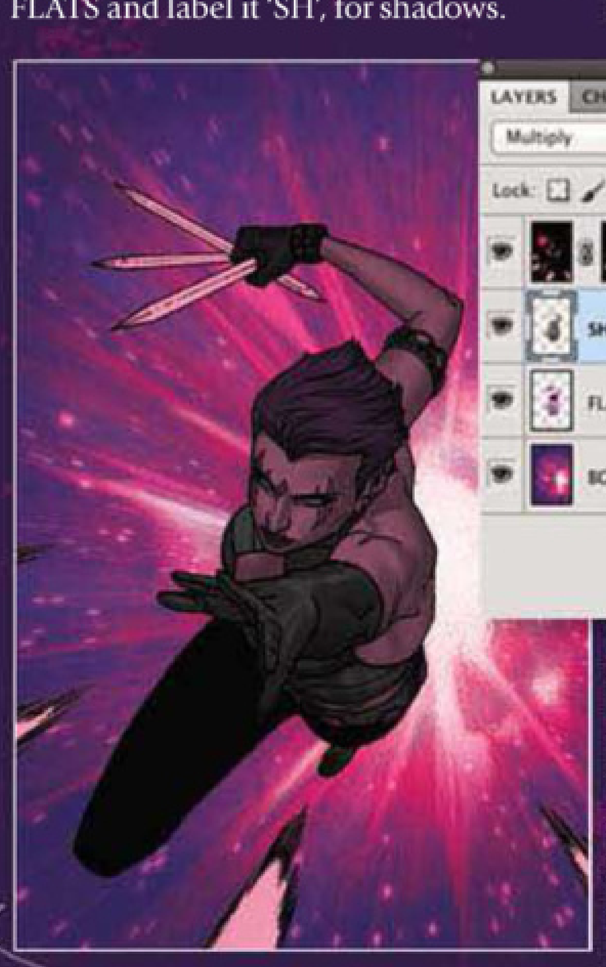
8 Flats out

Now I tackle the flats, which are the foundation of the image. I create a new layer above my BG layer and under my inks layer, calling it 'FLATS'. I fill it with a Hard Edge brush, with 100 per cent Opacity and 100 per cent Flow. I fill all the areas to separate those that are going to have different colours, such as skin, hair and so on.



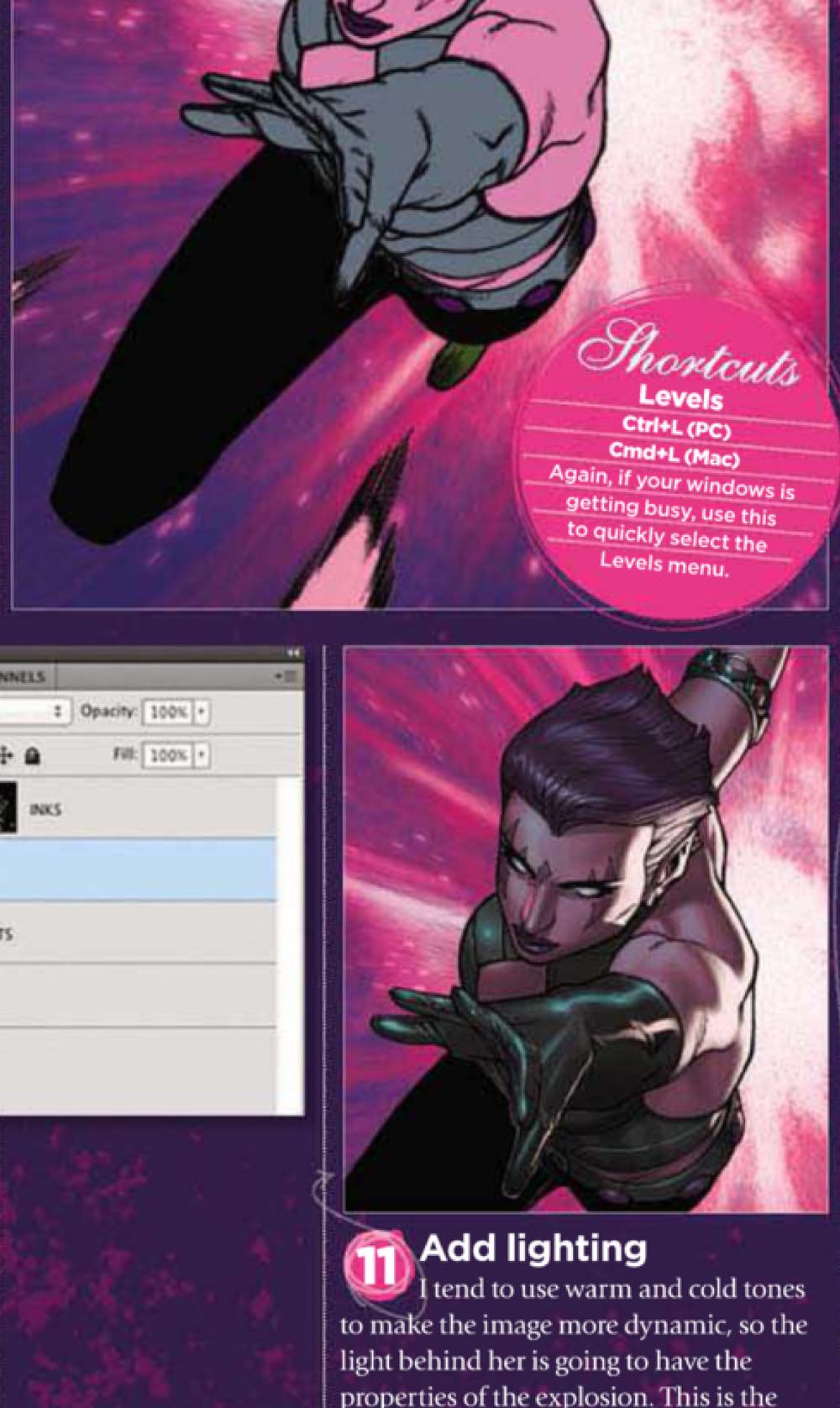
9 Start on the shadows

Once I have my flats done I start applying shadows. I think about the position of the lighting in relation to my character. My main light will be the explosion that's behind the character, and I'll have a secondary light that'll be on top. I create a new Multiply layer above FLATS and label it 'SH', for shadows.



10 Finish off shadows

To apply shadows without leaving the character boundaries and affecting areas I don't want to paint, I use the Magic Wand tool on the FLATS layer. I select areas of the flats to apply shadows to specific parts of the drawing. On the SH layer I start applying the shadows using my Molina-hard edge brush with 25 per cent Flow and 70 per cent Opacity. Then I choose a warm grey tone and apply the shadows, always keeping in mind the direction of the lights.



Shortcuts

Levels

Ctrl+L (PC)

Cmd+L (Mac)

Again, if your windows is getting busy, use this to quickly select the Levels menu.

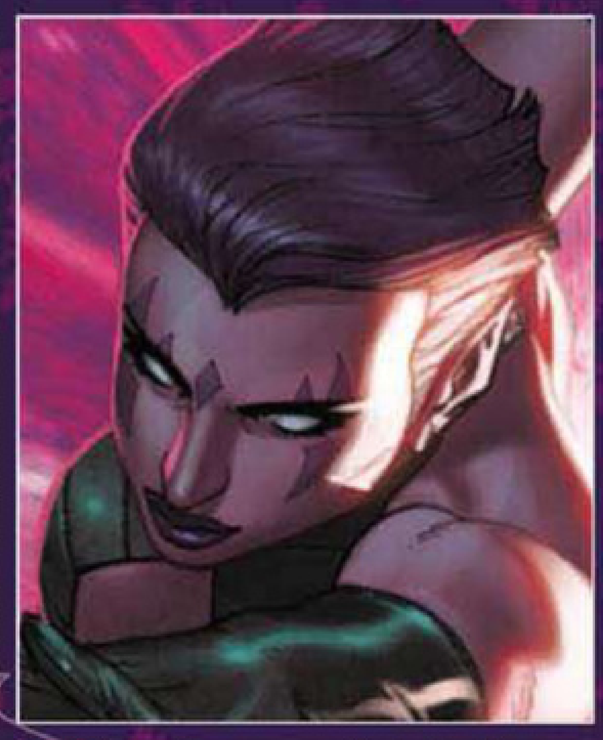
PRO SECRETS

Shadow play

To change the shadow tone easily, keep the SH layer selected and hit Ctrl+U. This selects the Hue/Saturation menu. Play with the handles to modify the tone and you can change the colour, saturation and opacity of your tone in just seconds.

11 Add lighting

I tend to use warm and cold tones to make the image more dynamic, so the light behind her is going to have the properties of the explosion. This is the dominant light; the second light is the ambient light that's going to be colder bluish tone. I create a new layer over my SH layer but under my inks layer, name it LGT and leave it on normal mode. I then apply lights with the Molina-hard edge brush. I start with the dominant light, using a light pink tone with the Opacity and Flow set at almost 100 per cent, because the light is so strong and doesn't tend to give much blending. Then I apply the second light with colder blue tones with the same brush.



12 Texture and details

I select the inks layer and with a Molina-hard edge brush, at 100 per cent Opacity and 100 per cent Flow, start to lay some light tones on the lines of the character. This gives refinement to the image; the idea is to only apply this to the lines affected by the light. Next I create a layer over my inks layer and name it FX. I put the layer on Vivid Light mode and, using a Molina-soft edge brush with 40 per cent opacity and 40 per cent flow, select a warm orange tone and paint over the dominant light area. This creates a warm transition effect between shadows and lights, making the skin look more natural. Then I flatten all my layers.

13 Final image

I add texture to my image, creating a layer on top putting the Opacity to 22 per cent on Overlay mode. Then I merge all the layers again, before creating a final layer – 'Details' – where I go over my general image polishing details and shadows. Finally, I make colour corrections on the general image using the Color Balance tool until I'm happy with the result. And here's the final artwork on the cover!



Buy rare editions & the latest issues of ImagineFX

FANTASY & SCI-FI DIGITAL ART

DIGITAL EDITIONS

Single issues: £4.99/$6.99/€5.49

Download and read the latest edition of ImagineFX on your smartphone, tablet, laptop or while sat at your computer at home. Apple products use the latest iTunes app Newsstand, while all other devices utilise the services from Zinio or Barnes & Noble.

iPad, iPhone and iTouch*

www.bit.ly/ifx-app

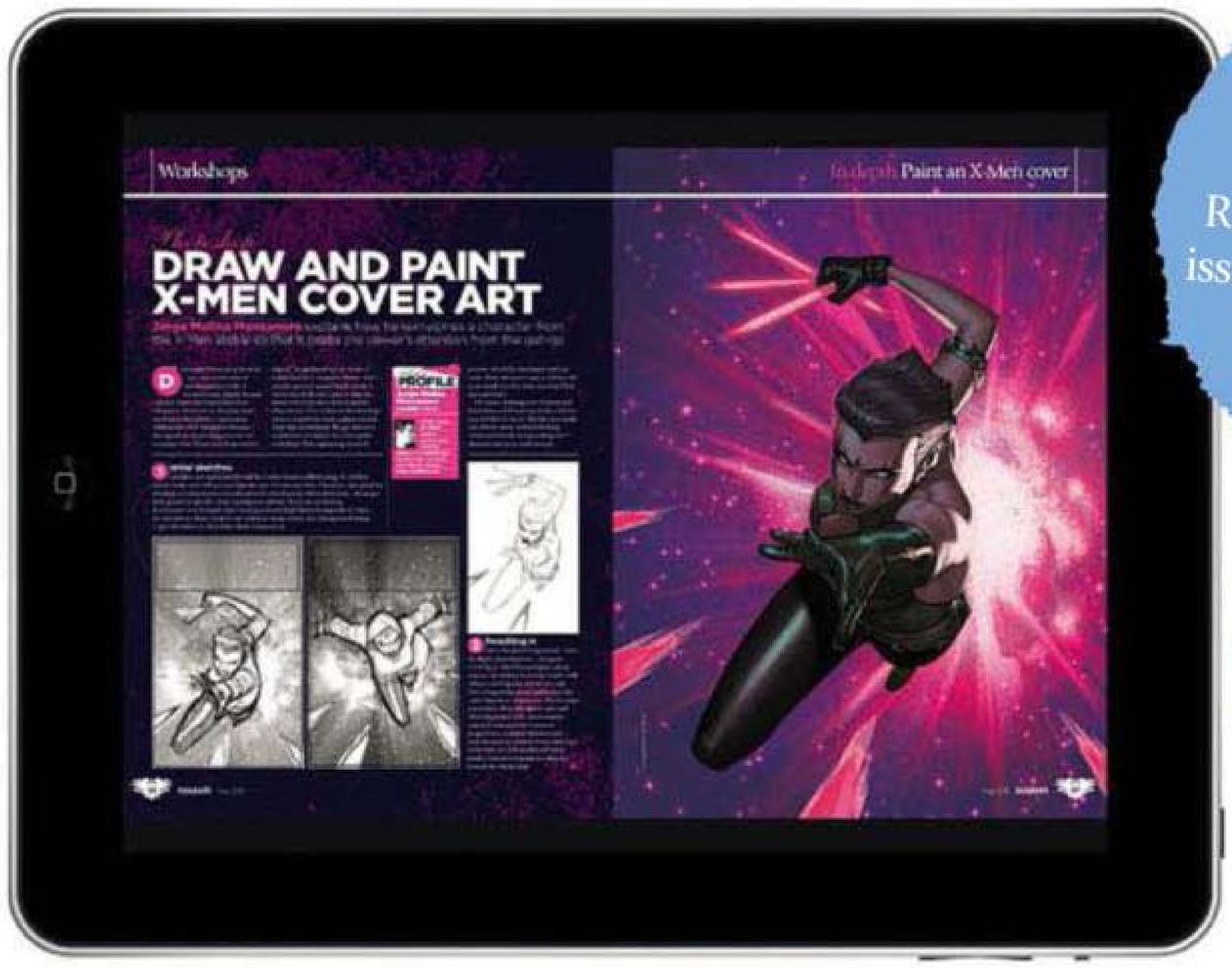
*You'll need iOS 4.3 or higher.

Android, tablets and desktops

www.zinio.com/imaginefx-single

Nook

www.bit.ly/ifxnook





Rare editions (including issues 1-7,) are available at **www.zinio.com/imaginefx-single**

WANT TO SUBSCRIBE?

DIGITAL EDITION P33
PRINT EDITION P34

PLEASE NOTE THAT DVD CONTENT IS NOT INCLUDED WITH DIGITAL EDITIONS

PRINT EDITIONS

Single issues (incl. delivery): **UK** £5.99, **Europe** £6.99, **Rest of world** £7.99

Issue 76 December 2011



It's all go in our vehicle design special, as great artists including Syd Mead talk us through the Mechanics of Industrial Design. Then we explain how to paint a 3D fighting mech, a fleet of retro starships, and futuristic scenes using custom brushes in Photoshop. Oh, and 2011's Rising Stars results are in!

Issue 77 Christmas 2011



Artists from China, Japan and South Korea feature in this issue's knock-out workshop section, which covers traditional, 2D and 3D art. Chinese painter Wenjun Lin gives us an insight into the digital art scene in his homeland, while Jesper Ejsing opens up his portfolio to reveal fantasy creatures that are all too believable!

Issue 78 January 2012



We celebrate Art Nouveau, including a Legends feature on Alphonse Mucha. Elsewhere there's a Remko Troost workshop on slow-painting, Don Seegmiller on how to blend with colour, Sean Andrew Murray tours Arthur Rackham's illustrious world and much, much more.

Issue 79 February 2012



Video games developer Rocksteady Studios gives us the lowdown on what it takes to become a successful concept artist. We also interview Wayne Barlowe, whose creature designs are out of this world, and feature workshops on two tribes going to war, a deathly beautiful maiden and painting on the iPad.

Issue 80 March 2012



Aly Fell's lovely pirate lass gracing the cover is just the start of this art treasure-laden issue. We feature great traditional artists Paul Bonner and Howard Pyle – the latter introduced by Dinotopia's James Gurney, while Dan Dos Santos talks composition, and Anne Pogoda shares her perfect skin paint tips.

Issue 81 April 2012



Take cover as Daarken's knight charges onto the cover! The fantasy theme continues with Dan Scott, who paints a range of mêlée weapons. Todd McFarlane talks to us about his new project, and our workshop artists cover castles, lighting and recasting a classic fantasy beast.

Visit **www.bit.ly/ifxbackissues** Phone **+44 (0) 844 848 2852**

Storemags



Next month in...

FANTASY & SCI-FI DIGITAL ART

ImagineFX

The art of sci-fi

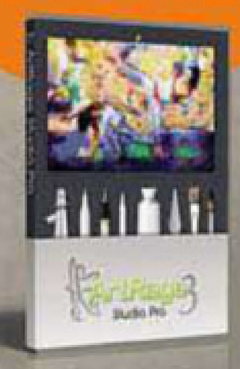
Give your retro sci-fi illustrations a new twist with **Derek Stenning!**

GET PAINTING IN PLEIN AIR

We speak to leading artists who are taking their art al fresco.

Subscribe today

SAVE UP TO 40 PER CENT OFF IMAGINEFX AND GET ARTRAGE3 STUDIO PRO FREE! SEE PAGE 34 FOR DETAILS



See more of Derek Stenning's art at **www.borninconcrete.com**

Also

Outer space

Introduce vivid colours and a sense of depth to your galactic art with David Demaret.

Flying machines

TRON: Uprising designer Joon Ahn shares how he concepts a space ship ready for flight.

Model making

James Gurney shows how to sculpt maquettes to help improve your painting skills.

ISSUE 83 ON SALE *Friday 27 April 2012*

Photoshop

COMPOSE A GAME CARD CHARACTER

Craig Elliott reimagines World of Warcraft's Lady Sylvanas for Blizzard's card game, explaining his colour and composition choices as he goes

Artist PROFILE

Craig Elliott
COUNTRY: US



Craig is a freelance concept artist, illustrator and character designer for animation, TV, games and films. He's worked for Disney, DreamWorks and Warner Brothers, among others. A book of his art has just been released by Flesk Publications.
www.bit.ly/craigelliott

Painting trading card images for Blizzard is a challenge similar to the ones I face when I'm designing for a Disney or Blue Sky movie: I need to create a compelling image, that fits with the style already established by the studio, but at the same time has something new and unique about it.

Juggling these seemingly contradictory elements is the hidden part of designing for other people and companies. When you're working for yourself these things don't matter – you can paint whatever you want. This is also one of the big factors that can separate a professional artist from an amateur or non-professional. It's essential to remember you're performing a service, trying to get into the head of the people who are paying you to give them what they want.

Sometimes they don't yet know what they want, and you have to make suggestions until they feel comfortable with a direction. Other times they have a clear idea, and you need to tease every bit of that idea out of their head before you start. If you leave scraps of their idea with them and don't draw it out of them, you'll be surprised when you show the painting and there's something important missing, which the client wanted! This is the hidden side of concept art. In this article I'll try to show how this works with the technical part of illustration that we can all see with our eyes.



1 Feeling sketchy

The first thing I like to do when painting a figure is create inspirational snippets of hands, facial expressions, composition ideas and such-like, without worrying about getting a final sketch down on paper. Here I'm really just experimenting with things, gaining a feel for what it's like to shoot an arrow, and trying out possible poses, facial expressions and shapes. I like to pick my favourites and clean them to show them to an art director. I choose a direction I like and begin to flesh it out with darker values refining the character's anatomy and pose as I go.

2 Adding colour

I finish off the sketch with coloured pencils on brown paper by adding some white to give myself the range of values and an idea of the two main things I want to focus on in the final composition: the arrows and Sylvanas' upper body. I like to make alterations in Photoshop and try slightly different directions. I'm adding a new background configuration and rock formation, as well as a better cape in this case. Photoshop also enables me to boost the contrast with Dodge and Burn to help get the sketch closer to the final levels of contrast that the painting will have.





Shortcuts
Preserve transparency
[/] (Mac or PC)
This locks all the pixels in the layer you're working on, so you can only paint on them.

3 Setting up for painting

I tint the initial sketch so I'm working in a colour space that'll be close to the final painting. I make corrections to the image that the art director asked for; such as having the bow and arrows come at the viewer more, to place arrows in a quiver behind the figure and add the armour to the legs and shoulders.





PRO SECRETS

Don't sweat the small stuff

Always keep an eye on your whole painting as you work – never let yourself get too lost on one section or detail. The ability to zoom in and out makes it easy to step back quickly. But it's also a trap, because you can zoom in and get lost in a single rivet on your character's armour for an hour.

5 Focus on the final composition

It's important to always keep the whole painting in mind, and what you're trying to achieve with it. To this end, I go back and make some changes to the composition to work with the new figure pose better, adjusting the overall lighting and focal point to be closer to what the final will be. I also change the cloak to be a bit more energetic and more complementary to the curves of Sylvanas' figure. I sometimes spend half my time on an illustration just getting these little rough things right, so that when I put my foot on the gas and start making things look real, everything is in the right place, the right colour and is drawn correctly.

4 Decide on the colours

Here I paint out the old arm and bow and sketch in ones that point more at the viewer. I also change the head position to match the new direction of the bow. I'm painting some of the armour, testing and balancing the local colours of the warm purple and white gold armour, as well as the hair. I keep fine-tuning these colours in a few small spots like this until they look like they're all lit with the same colour and intensity of light. In this case the light is a cool lavender-blue. I choose this colour so her skin, the light itself and the environment are in harmony. Contrary to popular belief, shadows aren't always cooler than the light side – especially when the light itself is cool. This is best seen in this painting on the purples in her armour where the cool light is desaturating the purple in the light side, making it greyer.



6 Starting to bring things together

Here I further fine-tune the values in the background so the figure and arrows (not in place yet) will be the two things that stand out most. I also begin to tint the previously monochromatic legs with the colours that her armour will be in the end. I always try to jump around catching things that aren't matching the level of finish that other parts have. This ensures I have a pretty good idea of where the painting is going as a whole, and I can make composition changes if I see things drifting off the rails. If I were to focus on just painting the legs for example, finishing them first, I might find they are totally the wrong colour, or the shape isn't pleasing compared to the ones I paint later. It would be frustrating and a waste of time. Working up the image as a whole avoids these costly mistakes.

WORKSHOP BRUSHES

PHOTOSHOP

CUSTOM BRUSHES: LOOSE ROUGH BRUSH



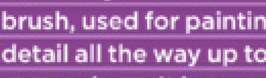
I use this brush to block in most things and to give realistic "brush dragging on canvas" effects, seen in the art of some traditional painters.

MEDIUM ROUGH



This is my workhorse brush, used for painting detail all the way up to atmosphere. It has a touch of texture in it that keeps the strokes looking natural.

STREAKED BRUSH

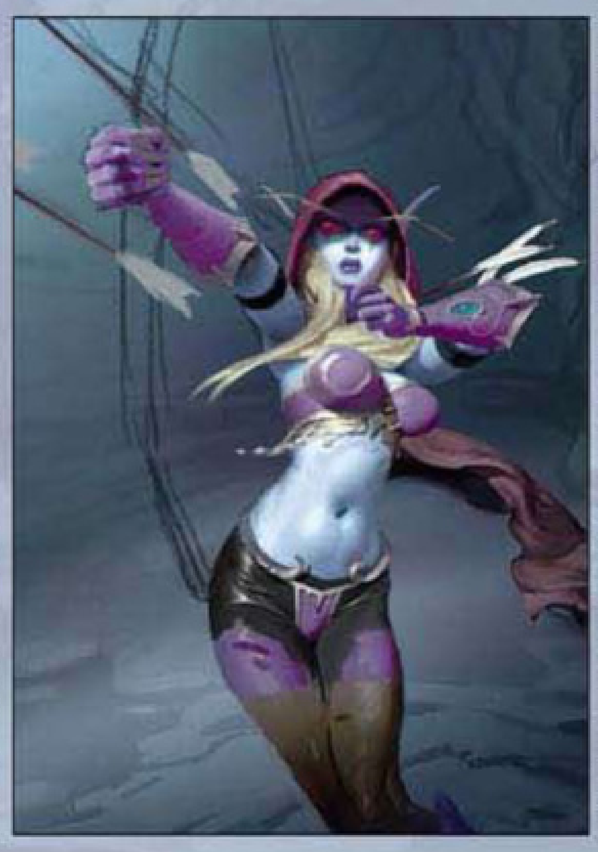


I use this brush alongside the others, usually to give a nice brush stroke feel. It's also great for anything made of fibres, such as hair or grass.



7 Final colours and shapes

I work up most of the figure, and her arrows, into what I consider a mid-stage block-in. All the local colours, like the purple armour, the maroon cape and hat, black leggings and bluish skin, are finally right. I add highlights and begin to render some parts more finely, like the metal on her top. I block in her face as well, using the colours that work well in her belly area. This is one of the rare times I use layers (other than to separate the figure and background). I find many more layers just slow me down. I might paint, say, a weapon on a separate layer, so I can focus on that. After I'm done with that element I'll almost always merge the weapon onto the layer the figure occupies.



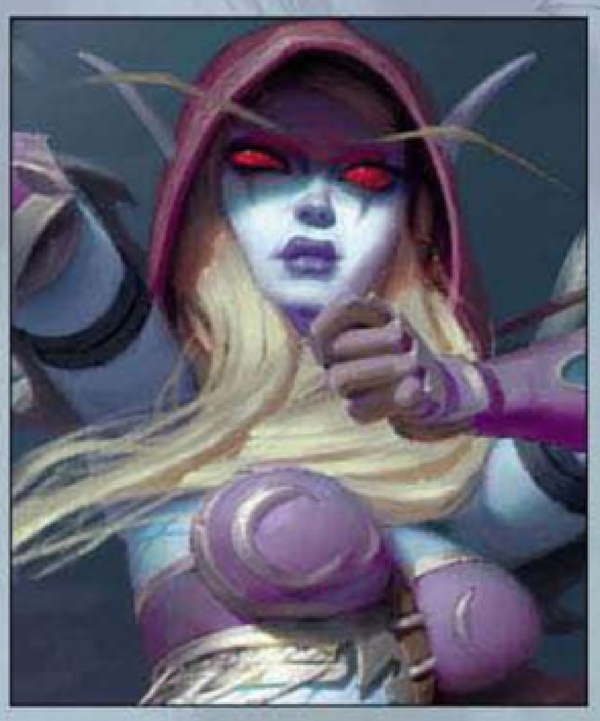


Shortcuts
Zoom in and out
Alt+[-] or [=] (PC)
Cmd+[-] or [=] (Mac)
This is a great way to check that your whole painting is coming together.

8 Missing pieces

I paint in the final missing piece: a maddeningly complicated bow. I'm given reference shots from various angles by Blizzard, but the models used in the game are relatively low resolution, so there's a lot of guesswork and invention with something like this. Thankfully, there's a vinyl figure of this character with her bow, so I go and buy one. With some plasticine and tape I'm able to set up the vinyl figure next to my monitor with some light from my lamp illuminating it from the same angle as it is in the painting. I paint each piece over my initial perspective sketch as if I were painting a still life. It doesn't matter if I'm painting a bowl of apples or a vinyl figure's bow – it's the same procedure.





9 A raft of refinements

Digital brushes have a tendency to create the same level of softness when you use them, so this needs to be countered. Some edges are softened further, and others are sharpened. I spend a good amount of time doing this in the background. This variety adds to the sense of realism in the final background and makes it look more like it's done with real paint. I also add some colour variation. I do this by changing the mode of my brush to Colour or Hue and picking a colour that's slightly different to the one I'm trying to put variations into. I use the HSB sliders on the Color Palette when I work, so I can tweak the Hue or Saturation to achieve this kind of colour variation.

10 Softening up

I soften the bowstring, the overall outline and things like hair and feathers. The softening around the figure avoids the cut-out look and makes the figure look part of the world she's in. I also add armour and clothing, as well as more hair and bits of detail everywhere. Here again I jump around trying to keep the whole painting at the same level of finish. I also refine the face and expression. Her expression was a little wooden and I want her to have a wry, superior and confident expression while still being sexy. I also add a bit of bounce light from her red eyes, to give her a slightly more evil touch.

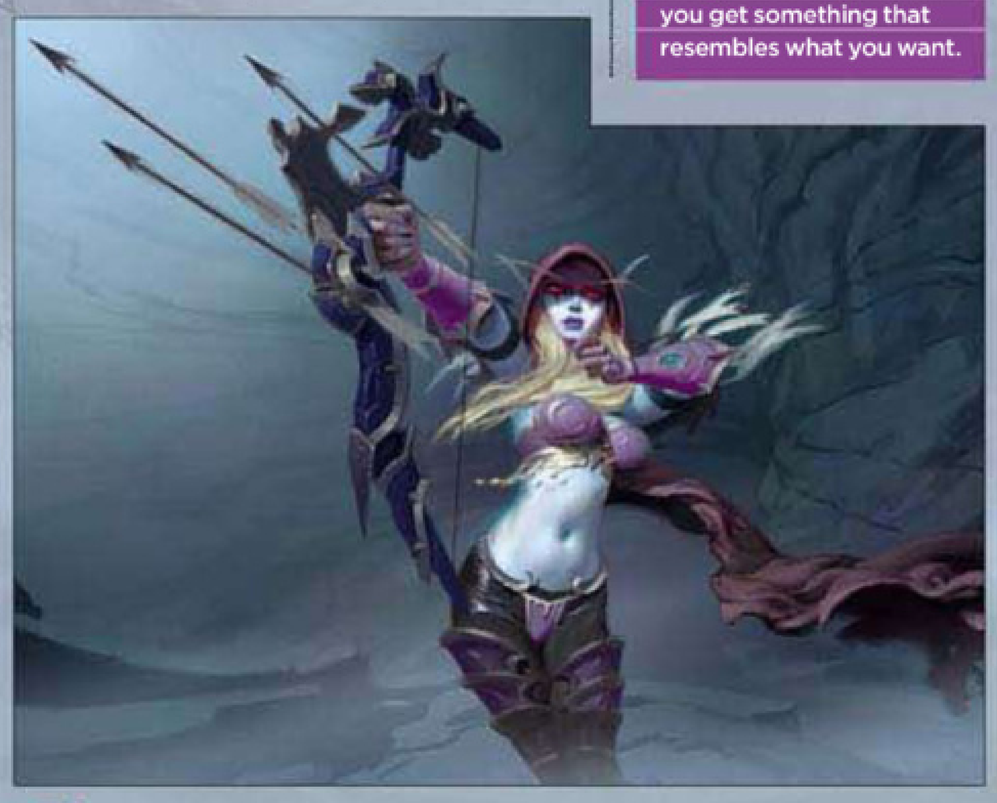
11 Final touches

I add, mostly very subtle, fixes and refinements all over the painting, finding little things and fixing them. I add more colour variation to parts of Sylvanas, like her cloak, armour and skin, with the same colour or hue brush as I did in step nine. I also add a magical glow around parts of her body that are exposed, so she seems more like the magical being she is.

PRO SECRETS

Realistic art

I'm often asked, "How do you paint something that looks so real?" It's knowing how to draw any basic 3D shape, first in line, then lit from any angle or angles. You merge these shapes until you get something that resembles what you want.



12 Final card image

The final trading card shows how the art directors at Blizzard crop the image to best explain the action described on the card itself. I always like to give them more art than they need so they have the freedom to choose how to crop things. This also enables them to use the bigger image later for a banner, box cover or poster, if they want.



Artist insight

ENHANCE YOUR DIGITAL LINE ART

Lois van Baarle shares her favourite tips for creating a variety of digital line work, from chunky and sketchy to smooth and elegant

Artist PROFILE

Lois van Baarle

COUNTRY: Netherlands



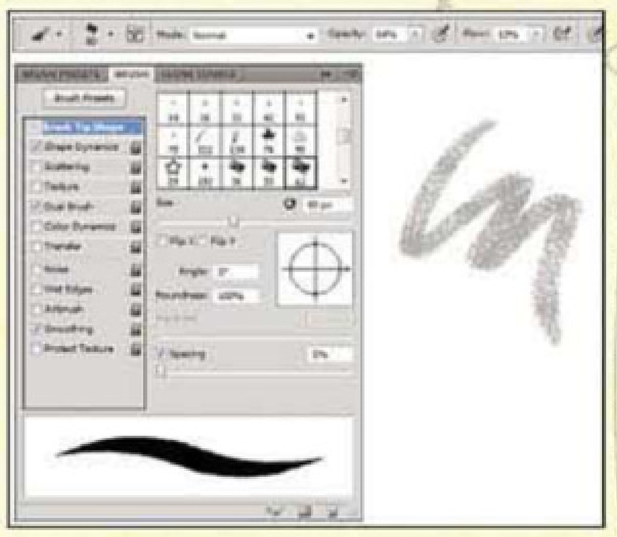
Lois has been drawing since the day she could hold a pencil, and started working digitally in 2003. Upon finishing high school, she studied animation and is currently a freelance illustrator and animator.

www.loish.net

I've been drawing digital line art for almost 10 years now and it remains one of the most difficult parts of the drawing process. Although some people believe that using digital tools such as Photoshop and a tablet make the process easier, it's hard to translate a steady, smooth movement of the hand into a digital brush stroke, regardless of which tablet you're using. Choosing from countless brush settings and drawing tools is a challenge in itself, not to mention the problems zooming in and out can present. Line art can look beautiful up close but bland when zoomed out, and vice versa.

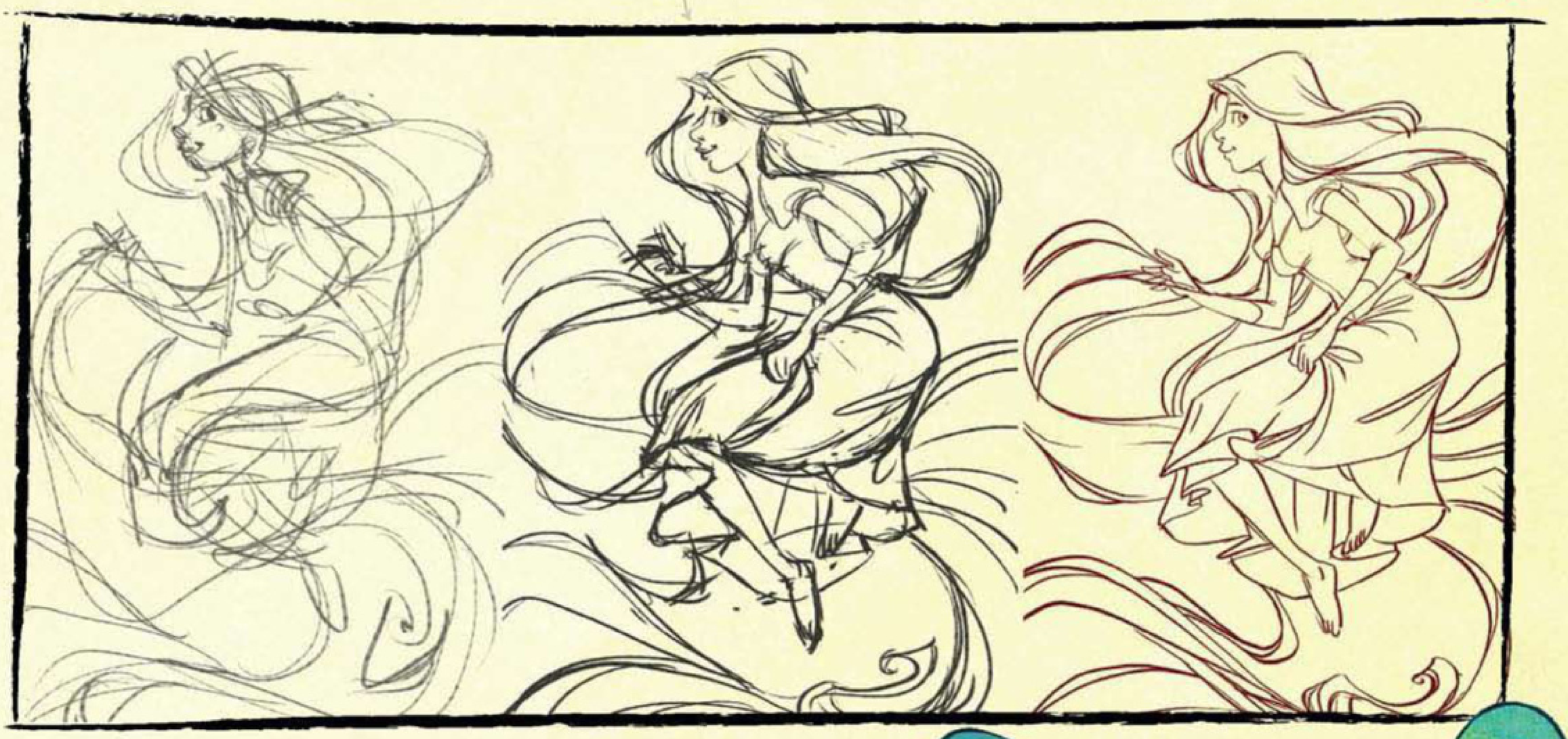
Still, making good line work is an important skill and a crucial starting point for any digital drawing. Line art can be chunky and textured, or smooth and detailed. It can be scanned from a sheet of paper or drawn completely in Photoshop. It can be supplemented with simple flat colours and cel shading, or painted to the last detail. The possibilities are endless.

In this workshop, I'll show the different methods, tools and approaches I use to create digital line work; from sketching to a polished, fully coloured end result.

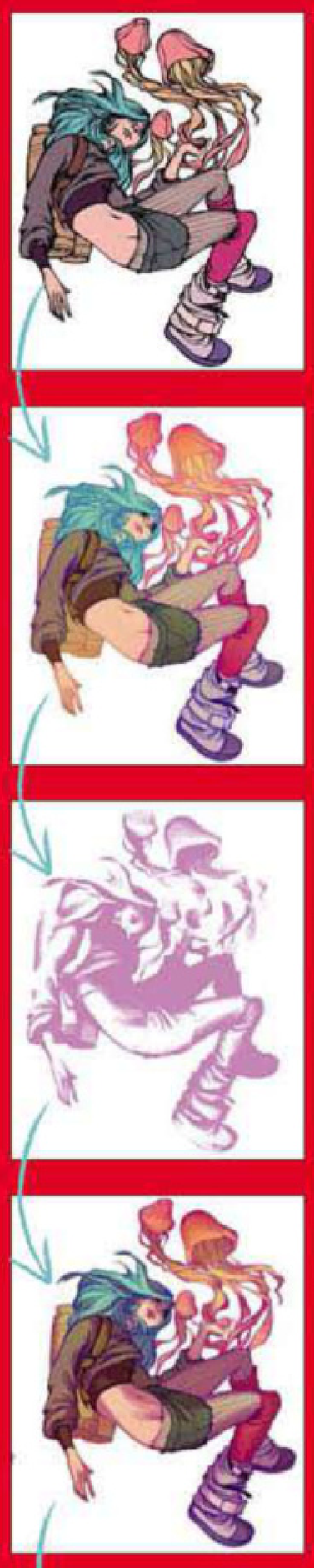


1 CREATE A DIGITAL SKETCH

I begin every digital illustration the same way: with a rough digital sketch. Here I focus on the shapes, forms and flow of the image. As you can see, my first sketch is pretty basic and doesn't contain a lot of detail for the clothing, hands or feet. I prefer to sketch with a large, textured brush set to light grey, usually with one of the standard Photoshop brushes. Lowering the opacity and flow of the brush gives it a rough look, and keeps the lines from being too sharp and precise, which I find can be distracting if you're focusing on movement and form. I also find that rough sketching is especially important for hair, because drawing freely creates a lot of pleasing shapes that I can emphasise later in the drawing process.







2 PAINT OVER YOUR LINE ART

Create depth and softness

A Coloured lines
My drawing begins as line work with flat colours underneath. I lock the transparency of the black lines and colour them to match the flat colours; I also blur the lines slightly. The line work is now significantly softer and more gentle, creating a more colourful and less harsh effect.

B Painting in the shading
I add shading on a separate layer, using a desaturated pink and setting it to Multiply so that it interacts nicely with the flat base colours. Although the image now has more depth and softness, I still want the lines to be more unified with the rest of the drawing.

C Painting over the line work
I merge the line art with the colouring and start painting over the entire thing. I can paint over the line work, rather than be limited by it, enabling me to modify and smooth it. It also softens the face, creates smoother, more gentle lines and adds depth to the image.





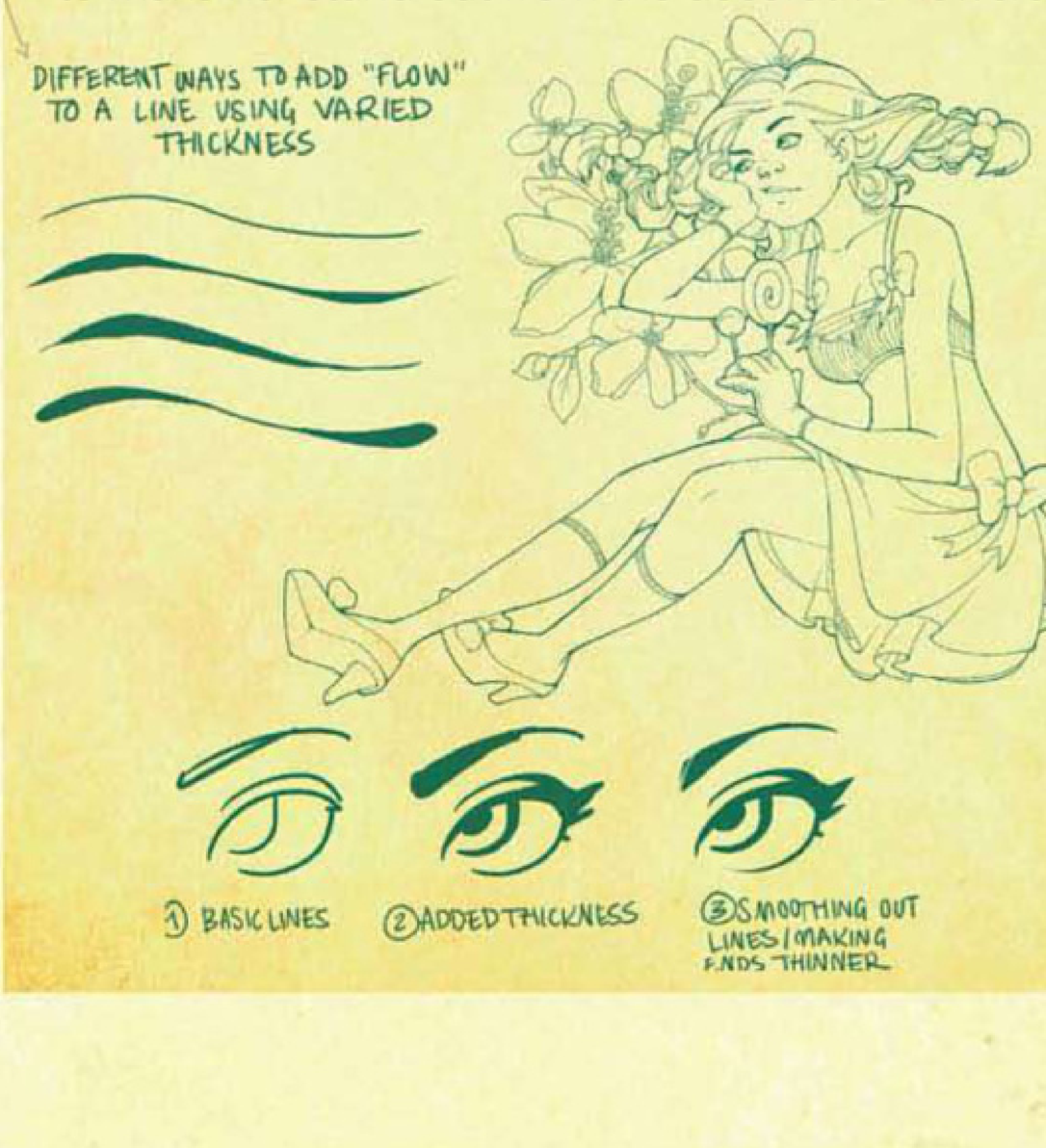
3 ADD DETAIL TO A ROUGH SKETCH

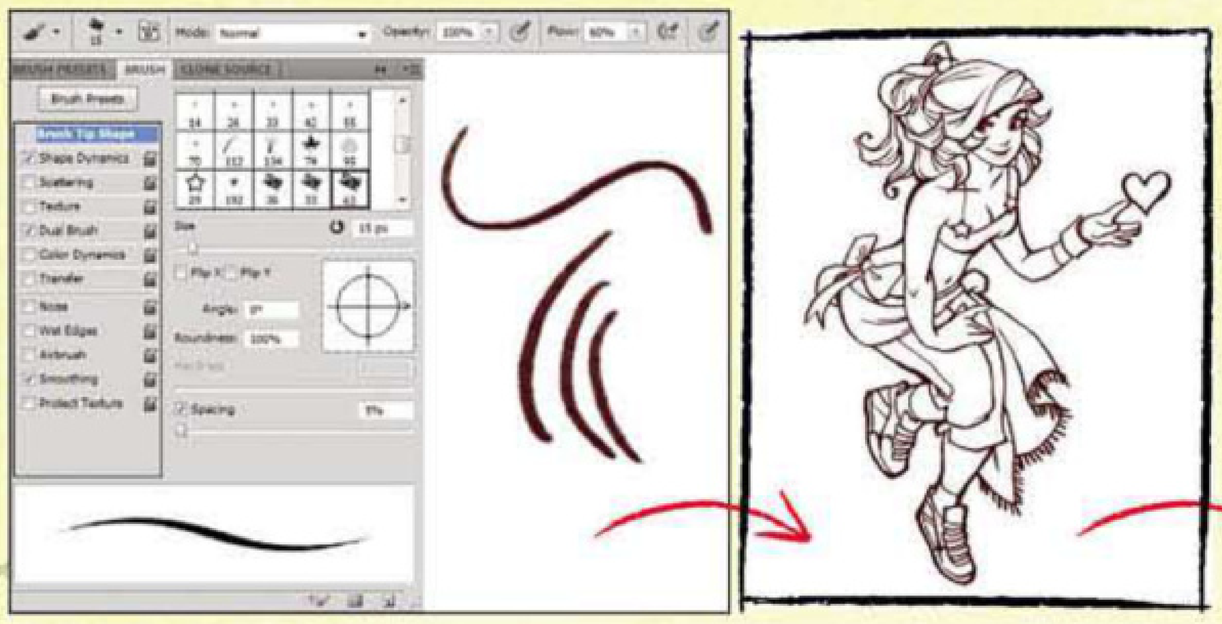
Sketches are usually dynamic, but messy and lacking in detail. Drawing finished line art over a rough sketch can be a huge leap, so I create a rough version of the line art before starting on the final version. This enables me to preserve the flow of the original sketch while moving closer towards a level of detail that's suitable for line art. Assessing the sketch is important: here the focus is on the face and the eye is led down the drawing. I try to preserve this by adding perspective to the fish and belt. The result is shaky and messy, but still refined enough to serve as a base for the final, significantly neater line work.

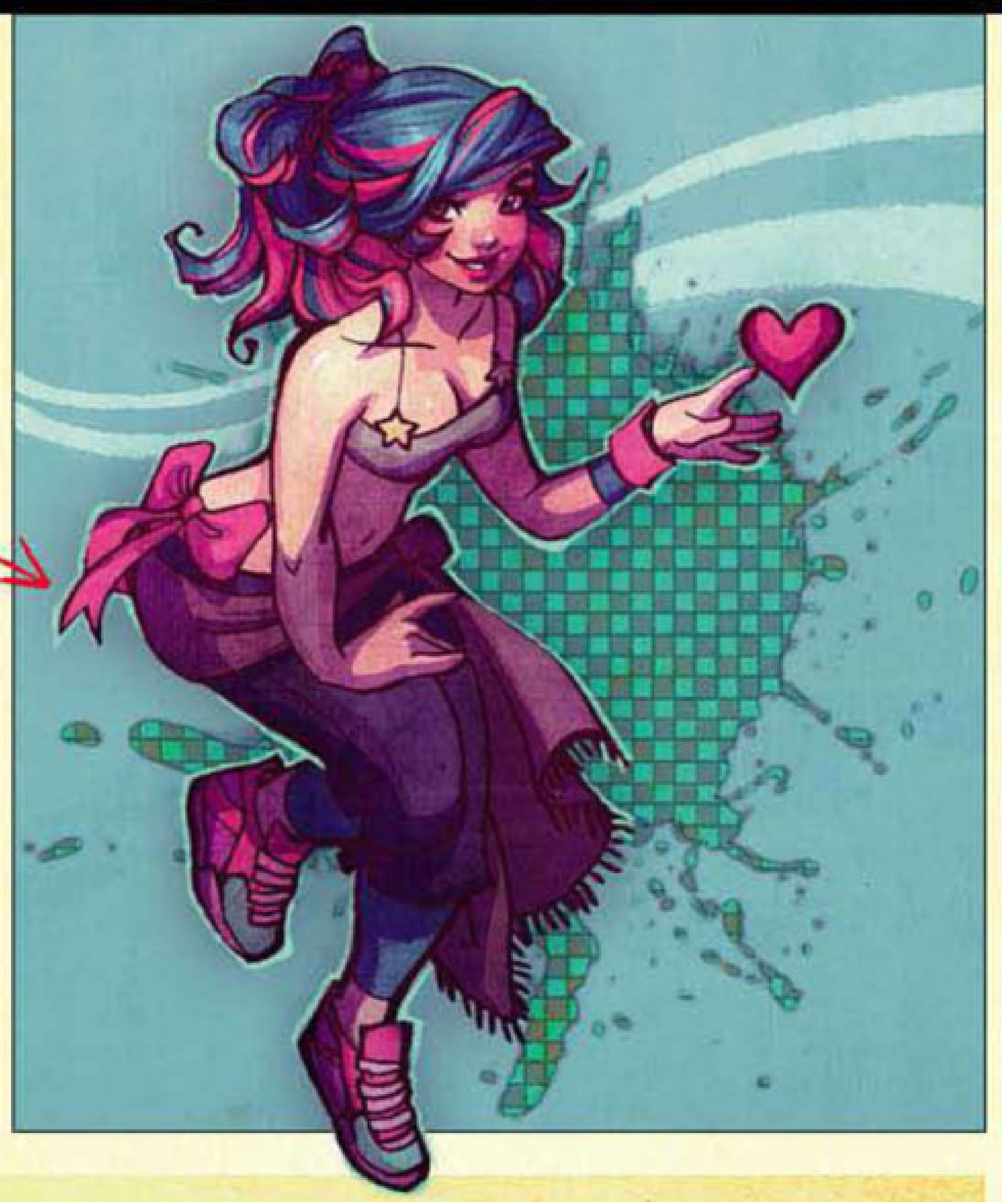


4 VARY LINE WEIGHT

Having lines vary in thickness can create a sense of movement, add elegance to the lines and lead the eye around your image. You can create this effect by using pen pressure settings – pressing harder will thicken the line. You can also draw in the thickness by hand. I tend to draw a thin line first, and then go back and thicken parts of it, based on where I feel it'll look good. I also add a thicker outline to the entire figure to make her stand out from the decorative flowers.





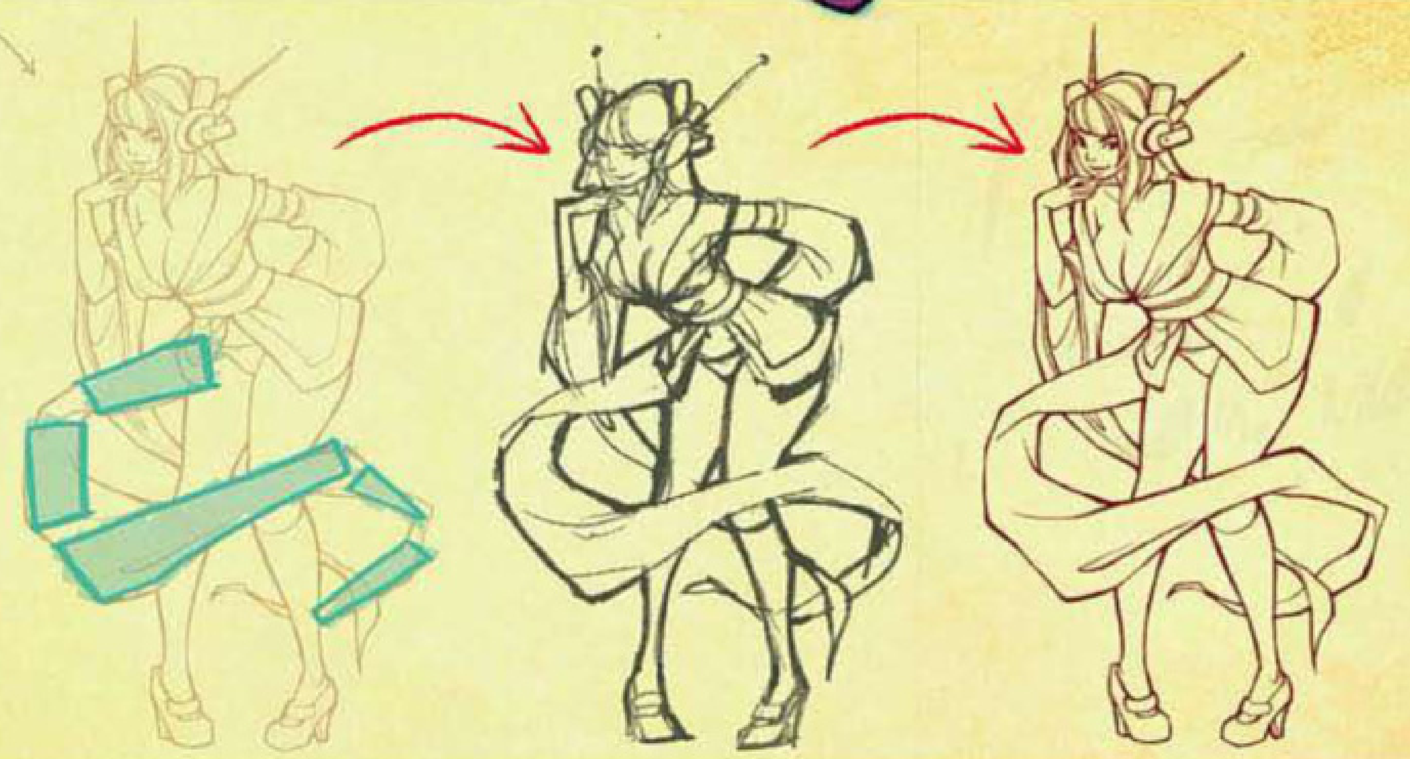


5 MAKE CHUNKY AND TEXTURED LINES

Usually the goal is to have lines look as smooth and clean as possible. However, for certain drawings, chunky and textured lines can work just as well. In this case I want a thick and chalky effect, so I use a textured brush with maximum Opacity and the Flow set to 60 per cent. I don't zoom in too much while drawing because I want to ensure the texture shows in the final downscaled version. Zooming in can make the line art look interesting up close, but extremely smooth when lowered to a normal size.

6 EXAGGERATE SHAPES IN YOUR LINE WORK

For certain types of drawings, especially character pin-ups like these ones, I like to add rough edges and chunky shapes. This exaggeration can give personality and style to the image, and keeps it from looking too boring and predictable. Although the way the fabric flows across this figure's legs is completely unrealistic, the chunky lines and thick folds give the fabric volume and movement. I go on to emphasise this by thickening the lines in certain parts and envisioning the fabric as blocks rather than smooth forms.





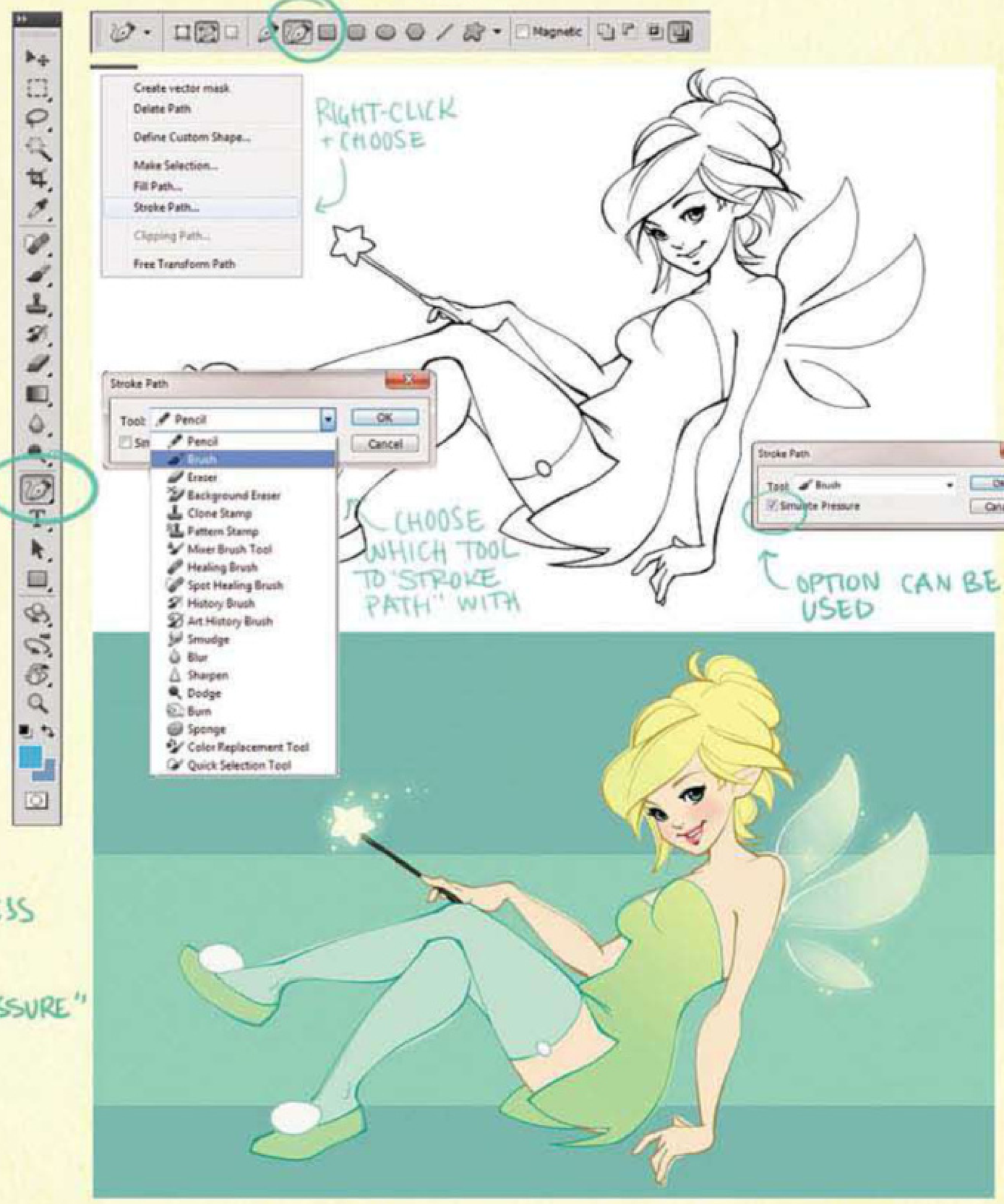
7 WORK AT A HIGHER RESOLUTION FOR SMOOTHER RESULTS

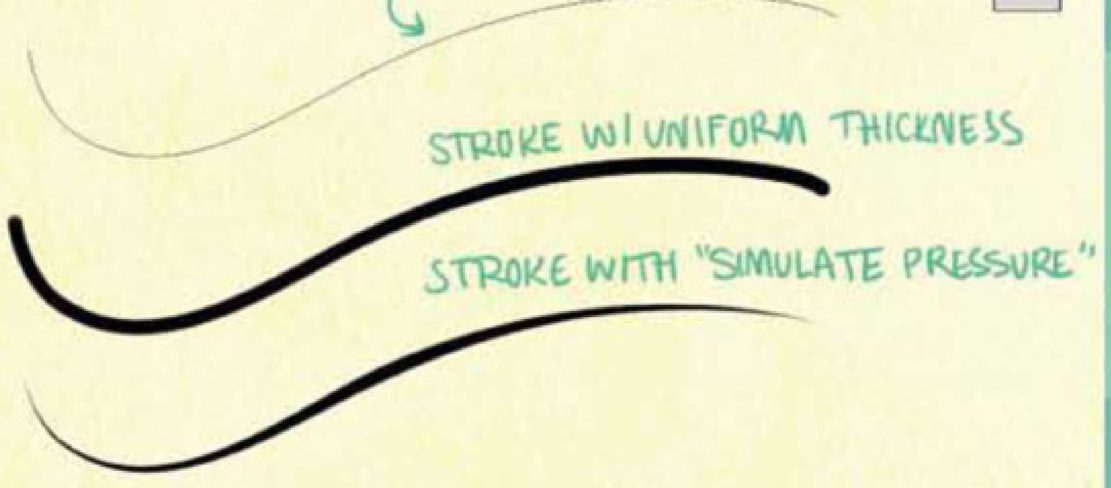
Many artists complain that their digital lines appear messy, pixelated or shaky. Working at a high resolution can be the solution. This image is drawn on a digital canvas of about 7,500 pixels in height. When scaled down, the lines will look smooth and straight. The more pixels you have to work with, the easier it is to create a smooth look while still keeping a hand-drawn feel. When this image is zoomed in at 100 per cent, you can see some rough edges on the face that aren't noticeable on the image when it's downscaled or printed.



8 SELECT THE FREEFORM PEN TOOL FOR LONG LINES

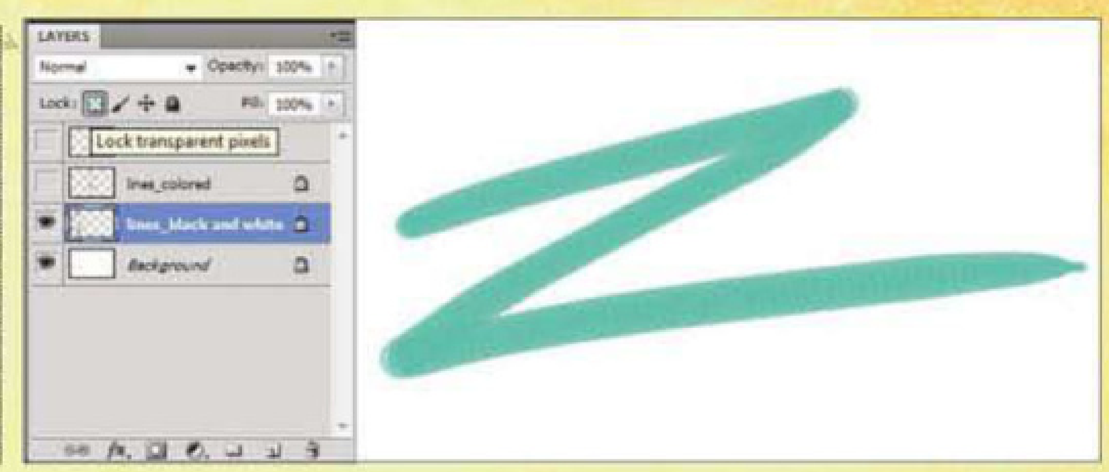
One of the biggest challenges of creating digital line art is drawing long, straight lines, especially if you insist on drawing everything by hand like I do. A great tool for this is the Freeform Pen tool. You can zoom out, draw a line and a smooth path will be created, correcting any shakiness in your line. Right click and select Stroke Path, and choose a brush to translate the path into a solid line. Simulate Pressure is an interesting option for creating a calligraphic effect. It's definitely worthwhile to experiment with the different effects that this tool can create. For this drawing I draw some of the thinner, longer lines with the Freeform Pen tool and the rest with the Brush tool. I prefer not to use the Simulate Pressure option, opting to draw in the different line thicknesses later by hand.

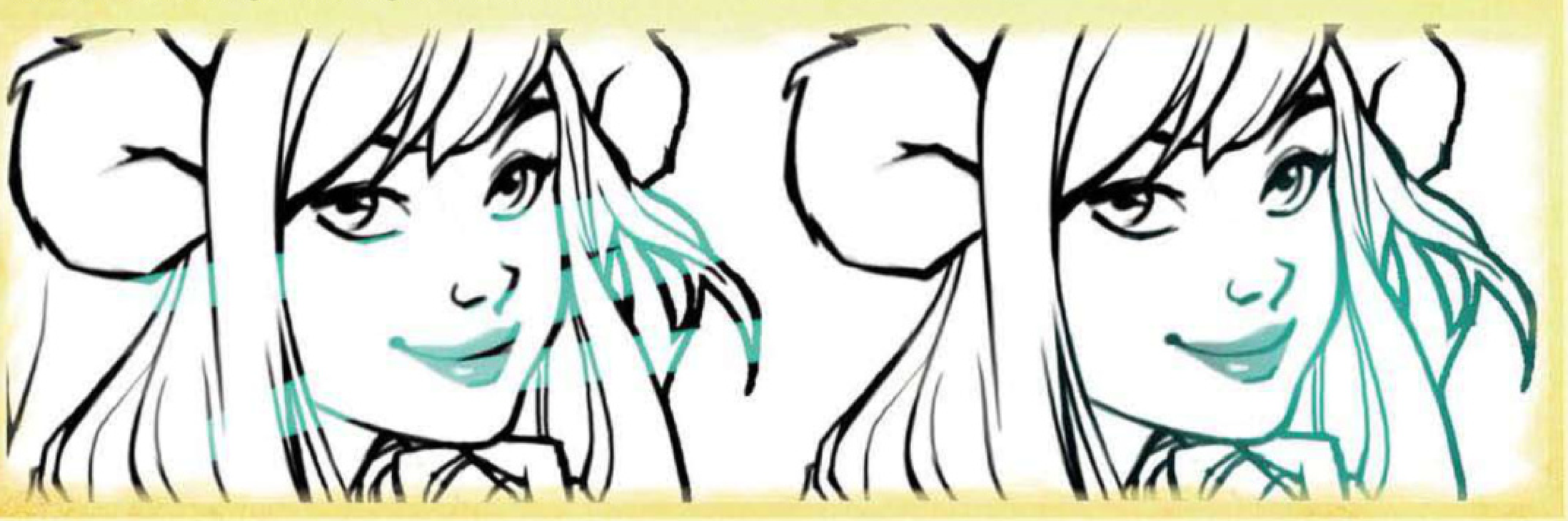




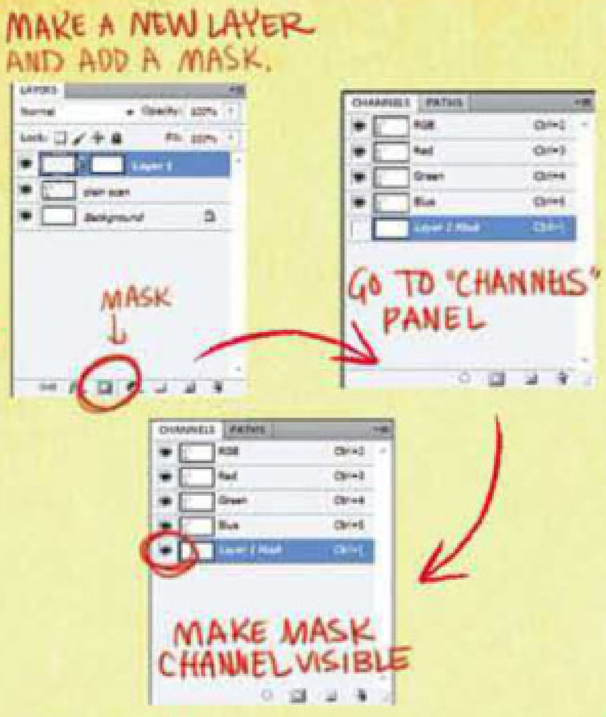
9 USE LOCK LAYER TRANSPARENCY TO ADD COLOUR TO LINES

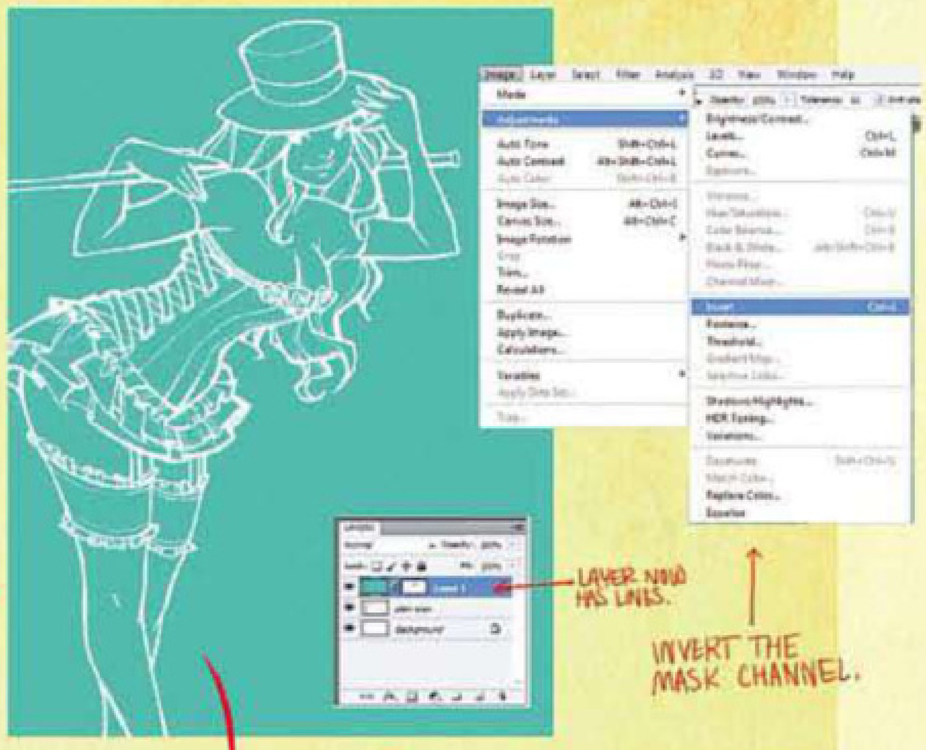
Changing the colour of different parts of the line work can be a good choice if it appears too harsh. In this case I chose a lighter colour for the line work of the hair and face to soften these features and bring the line work and colouring together. I click the Lock Transparent Pixels button of the line art layer, after which I can simply paint over the lines using a soft, low-opacity brush. This way, I introduce subtle, gradual colour transitions to the lines, but using a Hard-edged brush is fine too.



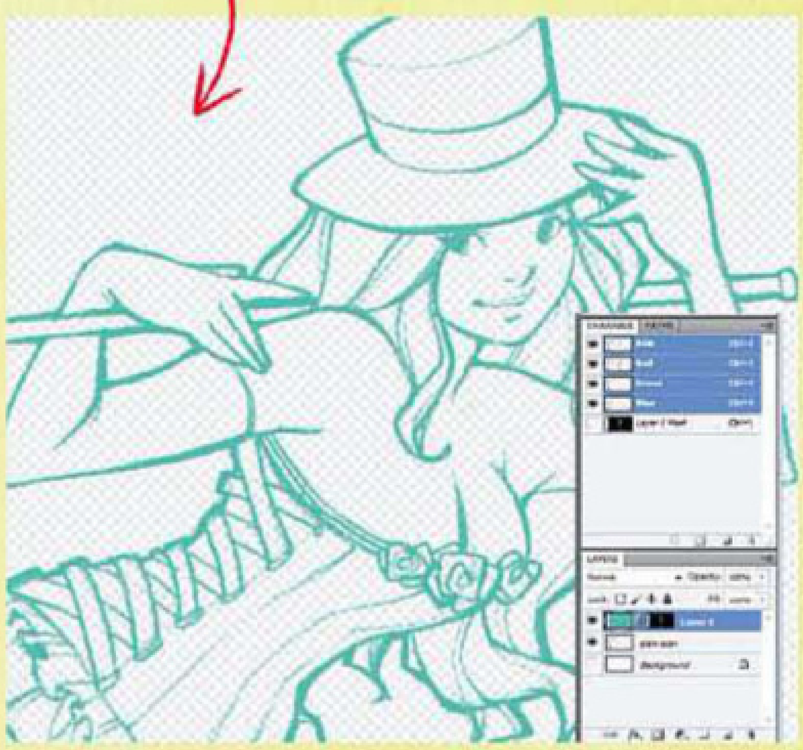












10 TURN SCANNED LINE ART INTO A TRANSPARENT LAYER

I often scan line art and then colour it digitally. A simple way to do this is to set the lines to Multiply. However, sometimes it can be much more useful to have the line art on a layer with transparency. To do this, I scan the line art and adjust the levels until the art is crisp and black against a white background. I select and copy it. Then I create a new layer, flood fill it with a colour and add a mask. In the Channels panel, I select the channel for the mask, paste the line art onto it and invert the image (Ctrl+I). The result is crisp line work on a transparent layer.



11 HAVE FUN WITH LAYER MODES

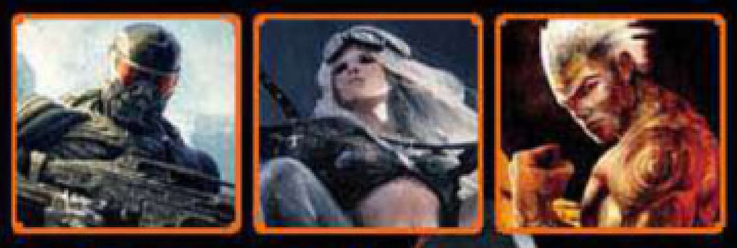
Once you think you have your line art and colouring sorted, you can play around with the layer mode to create interesting effects. Simple things like lowering the opacity or changing the colour of the lines can yield interesting results. Lightening the colour of your line art and setting it to Multiply enables the line art to interact with different hues in the colouring. One trick I occasionally like to use is to duplicate the line art layer, then blur it slightly using Gaussian Blur, and then change the colour using Hue/Saturation. I think the combination of the thin brown lines and blurred blue lines in Pet Fish creates a neat effect here.

ImagineFX PRESENTS

FANTASY & SCI-FI DIGITAL ART

HOW TO DRAW AND PAINT

GAME ART



CREATE KILLER CONCEPT ART

Discover how to design dynamic character art for video games

FREE DISC!
VIDEO WORKSHOPS & BRUSHES!

18 GAME ART WORKSHOPS

Learn new concept art skills in Painter, Photoshop and SketchUp

PAINT AMAZING DIGITAL ART

Step-by-step tutorials from the artists behind Uncharted 3, Batman: Arkham City, Star Wars: The Old Republic and more!

GET YOUR COPY TODAY



WHSmith • Barnes & Noble • £7.99

ORDER ONLINE: www.myfavouritemagazines.co.uk/ifx-draw-and-paint

FANTASY & SCI-FI DIGITAL ART

ImagineFX Reviews



Artist's Choice Award
Software and hardware with a five-star rating receives the IFX Artist's Choice award!

The latest digital art resources are put to the test by the ImagineFX team…





HARDWARE

106 Intuos5 touch
Ready to get all touchy-feely? The Intuos4 tablet is excellent, so how could it possibly be improved? Wacom's impressive new tablet looks very similar, but it's much more hands-on…

BOOKS

108 New reads
Structura 2: The Art of Sparth; d'artiste: Fashion Design; Velocity.

TRAINING

109 The Art of Freelancing
Tips for art business and marketing.

FILMS

110 New movies
The Adventures of Tintin: The Secret of the Unicorn; The Twilight Saga: Breaking Dawn – Pt 1; Real Steel.

VIDEO GAMES

111 New games
Mass Effect 3; Kingdoms of Amalur: Reckoning; Syndicate.







RATINGS EXPLAINED Magnificent Good Ordinary Poor Atrocious



Intuos5 touch

MAC & PC

TOUCHY-FEELY We unwrap the touch M to find out if Wacom's latest series of tablets has managed to improve on the excellent Intuos4

Prices touch S £200; touch M £330; touch L £430 **Company** Wacom **Web** www.wacom.eu **Contact** 020 7744 0831



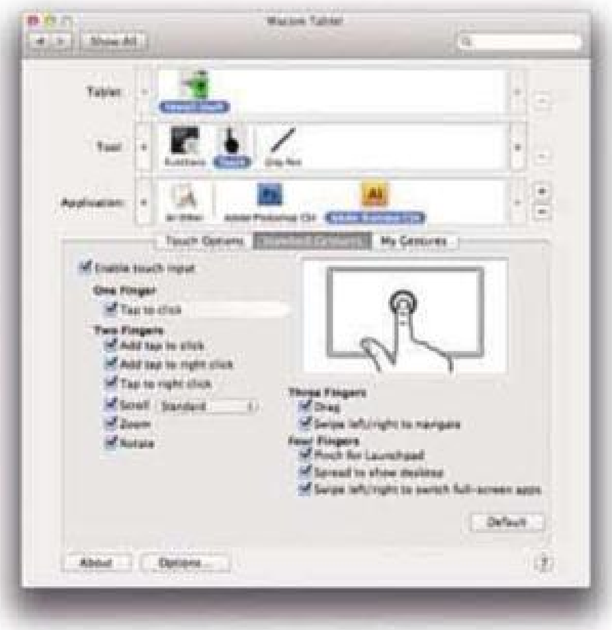
Wacom's grip pen from the previous Intuos with its 2,048 levels of pressure sensitive and 60 degrees of tilt is now standard across the entire Wacom range.

The new buttons offer a HUD on screen if you hover your finger over them, ensuring that you don't need to ever look off screen.

According to Wacom, Intuos users keep their tablet for on average six years before upgrading. As a result, the company has opted for an evolution rather than a complete reinvention of the Intuos range.

Visually the Intuos5 looks almost identical to its predecessor, except for a matte black finish that replaces the slightly plastic shiny feel of the Intuos4. The surface sheet on the tablet is now larger with a non-active border around the usable drawing surface (marked with white LED corner markers) and so gives a much better experience when working, because you're no longer met with a hard edge when you reach the edge of the work area with your pen.

The main physical change to the Intuos is the OLED Express Keys, which have been replaced with recessed touch-sensitive buttons under a rubberised plastic surface. Alongside the familiar Touch Ring that's also now



New touch functions enable you to get closer to your art with gestures and taps used to move the canvas and access menus.





The wireless kit bumps up the price by £35, but install it and you'll soon be able to paint more intuitively away from your computer.

A new matte finish and bordered workspace are just some of the subtle evolutions to the Intuos design that'll ensure you have a more comfortable workspace.

touch sensitive, the Express Keys use a new heads-up display to show you the shortcuts on your monitor, rather than looking down at the tablet. This is a massive improvement on usability and a great way to keep working without breaking your concentration from the screen. However, we missed the feel of pressing actual buttons on the older Intuos; the touch ring in particular could be a little unresponsive at times.

One element that hasn't changed is the stylus, which is the same grip pen you'll already be familiar with from previous Intuos and Cintiq models, and now works across all models on the Wacom range. This is the same for all other Wacom peripherals, which is a great way to reward loyal customers. One neat upgrade the company's included for the pen is in the drivers. There's a new pressure-sensitive curve that enables you to set sensitivity presets for the stylus in different apps.

Alongside these minor cosmetic changes is the major upgrade in the form of gestures. Already a feature on the beginner Bamboo tablet, it offers up to 16-point multi-touch gestures for collaborative working – although how you would use all those points we aren't quite sure! As well as using your computer's default gestures, you can also set up your own custom gestures based on any existing key command. So for example, you could use four finger swipes for Undo or three finger taps to access New Layers.

As with the Express Keys you can then set different gestures for different apps, which is a great way to personalise your workflow. When combined with the Express Keys, Touch Ring and Radial Function Wheel (which has remained from the Intuos4) it means you can have every feasible shortcut available from your tablet, helping you to focus on your artwork.

"You can set different gestures for different apps, which is a great way to personalise your workflow"

The process of properly setting up all these presets can be time consuming. Yet it'll be worth it as you'll soon reap the benefits of being able to maximise your drawing and painting time, rather than fussing around with keyboard shortcuts and menu placements.

To further assist your keyboard-free working you can buy a Wacom wireless kit for £35, which is another extra that'll work across the whole Wacom range – albeit one that increases the already substantial price tag. However, it's a must-have purchase because it enhances the Intuos5 experience by enabling you to sit back and work as if using a sketchbook or canvas, rather than a tablet. As such, you soon forget about the restrictions of being sat at a workstation.

DETAILS

Features

- New heads-up display enables you to to view express keys
- Up to 16 points of multi-touch gesturing for collaborative working
- Custom gestures and Express Keys can be set to be different specific apps
- Pressure curve enables you to change sensitivity of stylus for different roles
- Stylus and accessories are now compatible across the entire Wacom range
- Wireless kit uses radio frequency rather than Bluetooth, so it won't conflict with other devices on your desktop and has a greater range
- Each Intuos tablet comes bundled with your choice from Painter Sketchpad, Elements 10 or Autodesk Sketchbook Express 2011

System Requirements

PC: Windows XP/ Vista/7, USB port, optical drive, broadband connection

Mac: OS X 10.5.8, Intel CPU, USB port, optical drive, broadband connection

Rating

ARTIST INTERVIEW

DR CM WONG

The founder of Opus Artz has also been testing the Intuos5…

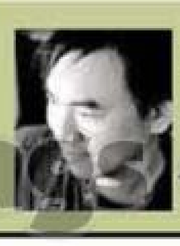
How have you found the new heads-up display when working?
The HUD overlay works nicely, with your selected task featuring prominently. On the medium model the buttons can be activated a little too easily; however, the larger tablet ameliorates this and is ideal for pro studio work.

Would you change the sensitivity of the pen?
The default setting works well on the new matte surface. The sensitivity adjustments look to be a good reincarnation of what was originally offered with the early Wacom tablets, and small minor adjustments for various painting software would be best for an optimal production workflow.

How have you found the new touch functions to use?
The touch functions are genius, because you can bind your own personal gestures. Rotate canvas works especially well and there's huge potential for customisation.

Would you recommend using the wireless adaptor?
If you enjoy working in the field then the wireless adaptor carries on as a natural progression from the Intuos4 wireless design. Combined with a lightweight laptop, this is a viable alternative to painting with a tablet. In addition, the adaptor is relatively affordable and housed conveniently within the Intuos's side panels.

How have you found the new 'matte touch' feel when working on your art?
The new matte surface feels more natural, and I would love to see it evolving onto the Cintiq range. The crux is to try out the various different nibs to personal satisfaction (I prefer the tip with a rubberised element or spring loaded tip) that gives you the best personal tactile feel for work.



Dr CM Wong has worked in the video games industry for many years. He is the founder and director of Opus Artz.

www.koshime.blogspot.com

storemags.com



Structura 2: The Art of Sparth

SPARTH FINDER The mononymous artistic director and concept artist's updated portfolio is now showing...

Author Sparth **Publisher** Design Studio Press **Price** £20
Web www.designstudiopress.com **Available** Now

French-born artist Nicholas 'Sparth' Bouvier has provided concept art for games such as Assassin's Creed, RAGE and the upcoming Halo 4, as well as covers for Frank Herbert's Dune and Christian de Montella's Les Rêves du temps novels. As you may have guessed, his work concerns sci-fi on an epic scale.

If you want to see delightfully stylised Photoshop paintings of spaceships, Structura 2 is the place to look. Sparth draws all kinds of spaceships: big ones, little ones, angular ones, curvy ones, combat ones and transport ones. The variation is impressive – some bring to mind bombers from World War II, while others look like giant beetles.



Away from these fantastical flying machines, the artist creates concept landscapes that range from medieval to post-apocalyptic. His visions are dark and brooding; Sparth's a definite subscriber to the 'dirty' aesthetic pioneered by the likes of Star Wars and Alien. However, it's not clear if his work is either consciously inspired by late-70s works or if it's just the preferred look of modern sci-fi.

The majority of the work covered in Structura 2 are Sparth's personal creations. His covers for Halo tie-in novels receive a mere four pages, with other commercial work scattered through the book. His abilities as a concept artist shine in his non-commercial work, though, and each image is packed with enough ideas to fuel many game franchises.

Sparth works exclusively in Photoshop, saying in his introduction that the program enables you to "literally invent a process of your own; borrow from tools and layers, and rearranging parameters in a way nobody had thought of." The artist includes demonstrations of his technique at the end of the book, which include his unconventional approach to scene building.

If there's a problem with Structura 2 it's in the way the book is published. The small images can't do justice to the awe-inspiring scale and intense detail of Sparth's work, and there's a distinct lack of information or context for many of his paintings. Although the glossy finish means that colours stand out, it also means that darker features are lost in the murky blacks. Publisher Design Studio Press will hate us for saying this, but in some cases, Sparth's paintings look better when viewed through the lens of a web browser.

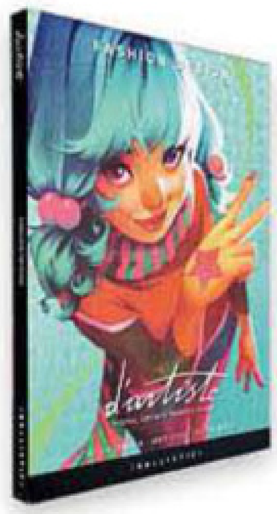
RATING ✍✍✍

Further reading...

Brush up on your fantasy threads, and a speedy look at one art master's work

d'artiste: Fashion Design

Editors Daniel Wade and Anne Pogoda
Publisher Ballistic **Price** £49
Available Now
RATING ✍✍✍✍

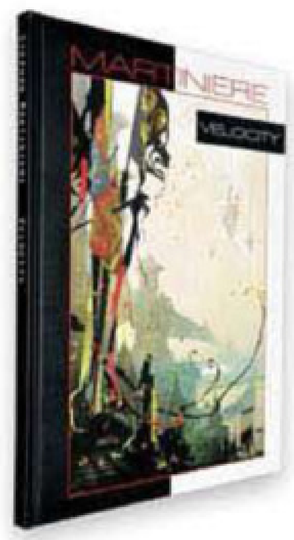


Giving its latest d'artiste release the title Fashion Design will no doubt bring in new punters for Ballistic Publishing, but there's no reason it should send existing fans of their fantasy and sci-fi-infused digital art away. This is an art book that's concerned with fashion, but fashion inspired by gothic, noir, fairy tale fantasy and the surreal.

Alessia Zambonin, Annie Stegg and Lois van Baarle take turns to display their chops in designing and crafting clothes around exquisitely made figures. But don't think all you'll learn about it how to depict a plunging collar line or floral patterns. Their insight into using fabric rendering and figure proportion will inform any digital artist, and the artists' accompanying galleries of favourite artists brings even more inspirational variety.

Velocity

Author Stephan Martinére
Publisher Design Studio Press **Price** £20
Available Now
RATING ✍✍✍



Like Sparth, Stephan Martinére specialises in sci-fi concept art, imagining how something will look before it's even been created. He's worked on book covers, games, rides and films. Velocity comprises Martinére's commercial projects, each page presenting sumptuously realised landscapes and believably fantastic creatures.

Most fascinating of all is Martinére's concept work on The Guardian, a grand sci-fi film project from Wolf Creek director Greg McLean. The film will probably never happen, but Martinére's artwork reveals a universe that's both thematically and stylistically distinct from all other sci-fi. Our only bugbear is that at 64 pages, Velocity has fewer pages than this very magazine – and it costs over three times as much.



Proof that Noah knows how to walk the walk, as well as talk the talk. His epic environment art skills has meant the artist has been much in demand.







Noah wants you to listen to his advice, rather than be distracted by artwork. Still, we think some visuals would enhance the learning experience.

The Art of Freelancing

BUSINESS HEAD Concept artist Noah Bradley lays down the laws of business and marketing for anyone who wants to become a pro artist

Publisher Noah Bradley **Price** $57 **Format** Download **Web** www.theartoffreelancing.com

So you've brought your work to a point where you think you can realise your dream of becoming a professional artist. Now what? The challenge of getting from where no one knows about you or your art to actually earning money from your art can seem intimidating.

Noah Bradley's starting point for this guided tour of marketing and business basics is that many art schools don't prepare their students adequately for getting themselves set up as a freelancer, and attempts to correct that oversight. His belief is that marketing and business are technical skills you can learn and perfect through practice, just like painting and designing methods .

During his video you're briefed on issues such as how to prepare for a freelance career, get the word out to potential clients, and the value of conventions. Crucially, Noah gives you a sense not just of how to get your business started, but also of how to be a professional, following the unwritten code of conduct that sets you apart as someone who paying customers can trust to get the job done.

The download is provided as an MP4 video, but it's more an audio track with slides. The text slides help with navigating topics and provide some dry humour, but much more could have been done to make the visuals productive: examples of good business cards or great-looking portfolio sites, for example. There's also a web-based resources list offered only to buyers of the video. Noah plans to continually extend this listing, but at the time of writing it's quite sparse: only two conventions are listed, for example.

But while there could stand to be more flesh on the bones of this guide, what you're given is certainly instructive in its own right. Even if you find some of the points Noah makes a little obvious, following all of his suggestions will undoubtedly help you establish yourself in this competitive market.

DETAILS

Topics covered
- Getting started
- Contacting clients
- Branding
- Mailouts
- Conventions
- Contracts
- Completing the job
- Managing your business

Length
294 minutes

Rating

ARTIST PROFILE
NOAH BRADLEY

Noah is a freelance concept artist and illustrator, specialising in environment and landscape work. He studied for his Bachelor of Fine Arts at Virginia Commonwealth University. Noah's clients include Wizards of the Coast, Alderac Entertainment Group, Triptych Games and Fantasy Flight Games, with work produced for brands including Magic: The Gathering, Dungeons & Dragons, A Game of Thrones, Legend of the Five Rings and Sacred 3. Noah's been published in Spectrum and Exposé.



www.noahbradley.com



Motion capture features in Tintin, but Snowy is 100 per cent animated.

The Adventures of Tintin: The Secret of the Unicorn

UNEVEN RIDE Hollywood's biggest director takes on Belgian's most beloved journalist in this mixed actioner

Distributor Paramount **Certificate** PG **Price** £20 (£27 Blu-ray) **Available** Now

Developed by Weta's concept artists, and brought to life with motion capture and animation, the new Tintin film is packed with stylistic adventure. Just don't expect it to match your treasured childhood memories.

A culmination of 20 years' work for Steven Spielberg, it was never going to please everyone. The director discovered Tintin after reading a review of Indiana Jones: Raiders of the Lost Ark by a French critic who compared it to Herge's classic comic. Indeed, Spielberg wears his 'action' cap while making this film that, despite Steven Moffat, Edgar Wright and Joe Cornish's screenplay, unfortunately revels in set pieces at the expense of its secondary characters.

There's still a lot to enjoy, though. With motion capture detailing the facial and body movements of Jamie Bell (Tintin) and Andy Serkis (Captain Haddock) combined with seamless animation, the duo look preternaturally tangible. As does the shady Ivan Sakharine (Daniel Craig) as they all race to find three model ships, and three clues leading to hidden treasure.

As shown in Weta's 'art of' Tintin book, Greg Broadmore worked slavishly on Captain Haddock, while Chris Guise's bustling Belgium street market offered a foundation for all the action to spring from. But something's lost in the character's transition from concept to screen. Haddock just isn't as glassy-eyed, angry or drunk enough. There was a danger to his obvious alcoholism in the comics, a bare-knuckled punch that Spielberg pulls. With the expressive Jamie Bell taking the lead, the blank page appeal of Tintin, who originally offered room for the reader to project upon, disappears.



Of course, this film shouldn't just be compared to the comic. It has its own appeal – it's striking, there's loads of action, and it's just the beginning. With Peter Jackson pencilled in to direct a second, it's a franchise to watch out for.

RATING ✍✍✍✍

Also look at…

The teen vamp series rolls on, and a father and son bond over fighting bots



The Twilight Saga: Breaking Dawn – Pt 1

Distributor Entertainment One
Certificate 12
Price £9
Available Now
RATING ✍



If you hate the Twilight films then you're probably not a pre-teen girl. But a captive audience shouldn't excuse lifeless filmmaking with a defibrillator current of teenage passion for a pulse.

Refining her eyes-to-ground-and-exhale acting style to include prolonged silences, Kristen Stewart remains the most compelling actor, with Taylor Lautner's petulant wet dog and Robert Pattinson's earnest vamp predictable by comparison.

Bella and Edward's honeymoon scenes are almost dialogue-free, with chess and niceties breaking up rough vampire sex. It's like Buffy starring in an Ingmar Bergman film for 12 year olds – inappropriate.

Bella becomes pregnant with a life-sucking demon child, but will Jacob defend her and side with his sworn enemy Edward, or join his pack in sniffing out the infant devil? He sides with her, 'til the break a' dawn...



Real Steel

Distributor Disney Home Ent.
Certificate 12
Price £15 (£20 Blu-ray)
Available Now
RATING ✍✍✍✍



While eight-foot tall robots punch the rivets off one another in a near-future boxing ring, surprisingly Real Steel doesn't linger too long on the spectacle. Shawn levy's movie pushes characters and story to the fore and it's all the better for it.

It's testament to the great visuals and robots designs by the brilliant Victor James Marinez that we can fully believe these monsters exist. The sell is so encompassing that it enables you to get wrapped in Hugh Jackman's roguish fight promoter's struggle to redeem himself in the eyes of his estranged 11-year-old son (Dakota Goyo), give the corporate villains a black eye and walk away with the girl.

The plucky underdog design of Atom against the menacing Zeus does the trick to keep the action going, while the cast play up to tear-welling melodrama. Rocky for kids, Real Steel is good old-fashioned, feel-good storytelling. With massive robots.



It's no surprise that in the third instalment of the game, the enemies are three times as deadly.

Mass Effect 3

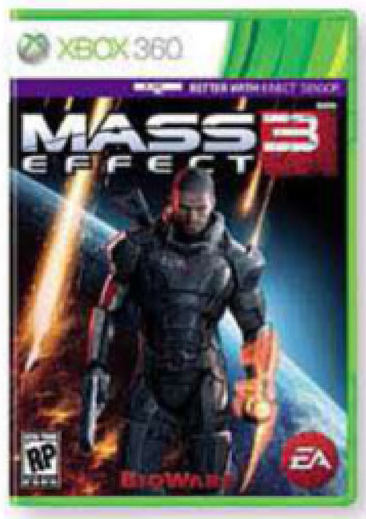
A GOOD CAUSE Can a planet's fate be decided by one person? It can be, if your name's Commander Shepherd

Format PC, PS3, Xbox 360 **Publisher** EA
Price £45 **Available** Now **Web** www.masseffect.com

Mass Effect 3 somehow looks exactly how the first Mass Effect still looks in your head. The conclusion of the trilogy exists at the bleeding edge of the next generation – new hair shaders, new cloth shaders, new water effects, new lighting and more on screen than ever before – but it's the consistency of the art in the face of new technology and new worlds to render that's Mass Effect 3's most remarkable achievement.

Beneath layers of 2012 technology is the same Syd Mead-inspired industrial design from the game's 2007 origins. The grimy worlds of Aliens and Blade Runner have a more powerful influence on the Mass Effect universe than is obvious from any screengrab.





"Syd Mead worked his way," says art director Derek Watts. "The arcs, the 45s... but doing the Syd Mead thing is hard with games. To repeat those themes through a whole level...?"

Yet they manage it while layering on gameplay that draws you deeper into the game's world. Mass Effect 3's subtle RPG gameplay and its narrative drive immerse you in a world where every decision affects Watt's beautifully designed universe with a coherent realism.

It's this consistency that defines Mass Effect 3, both in gameplay and visual design. Watts and his team manage to use themes that would be easy to sustain in a 90-minute movie, but should be impossible in a 40-hour game, let alone three of them. With Mass Effect now into its 120th hour, the team has never once backed down or looked for shortcuts. That iconic Mass Effect curve is everywhere, on every world, in every level. Watts' work is an exercise in world-building that's survived three exceptional games, and it's still bulletproof.

RATING ✍✍✍✍✍

Also look at...

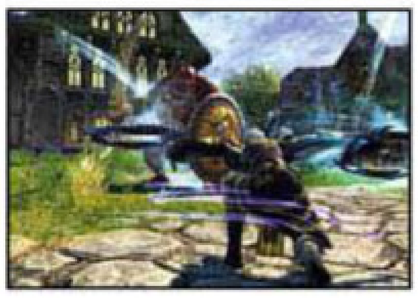
Todd McFarlane's six-year labour of love and a flawed reboot of a 1993 classic



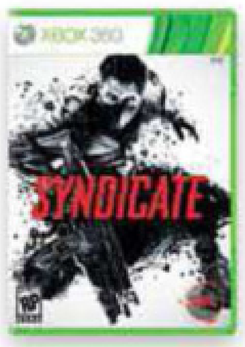
Kingdoms of Amalur: Reckoning

Format PC, PS3, Xbox 360
Publisher EA
Price £40
Available Now
RATING ✍✍✍

Ten thousand years of Amalur history have been penned by fantasy writer RA Salvatore and the art, like the mythology, has been built to last. Executive art director and esteemed comic artist Todd McFarlane worked with studio art director Tim Coman to design an entire world, all at once. Yet Reckoning's look is defined most by its origins as an MMO. There are huge spaces populated by clusters of mobs, instanced areas with obvious themes, and a low-detail look that should run nicely on even the creakiest of hardware. The MMO is still in development and Amalur's world is destined to go massive, but the dream of an Amalur MMO that'll compete with World of Warcraft only hurts the solo RPG that has to compete with Skyrim and Dark Souls.



Reckoning is a brave action RPG with an art style from another, very different game for a different purpose. As a result it never feels comfortable in its own skin.

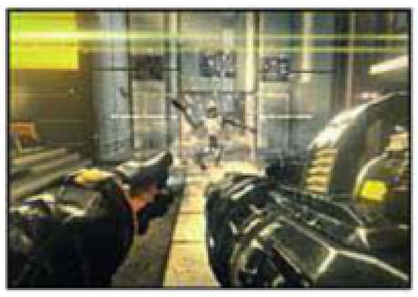


Syndicate

Format PC, PS3, Xbox 360
Publisher EA
Price £45
Available Now
RATING ✍✍

Last year's Deus Ex Human Revolution explored new ground in Blade Runner's 2019 Los Angeles and led it into the 21st century. In contrast, Syndicate's art director John Miles has allowed the game little of its own identity. This is Syd's city; Syndicate just lives here.

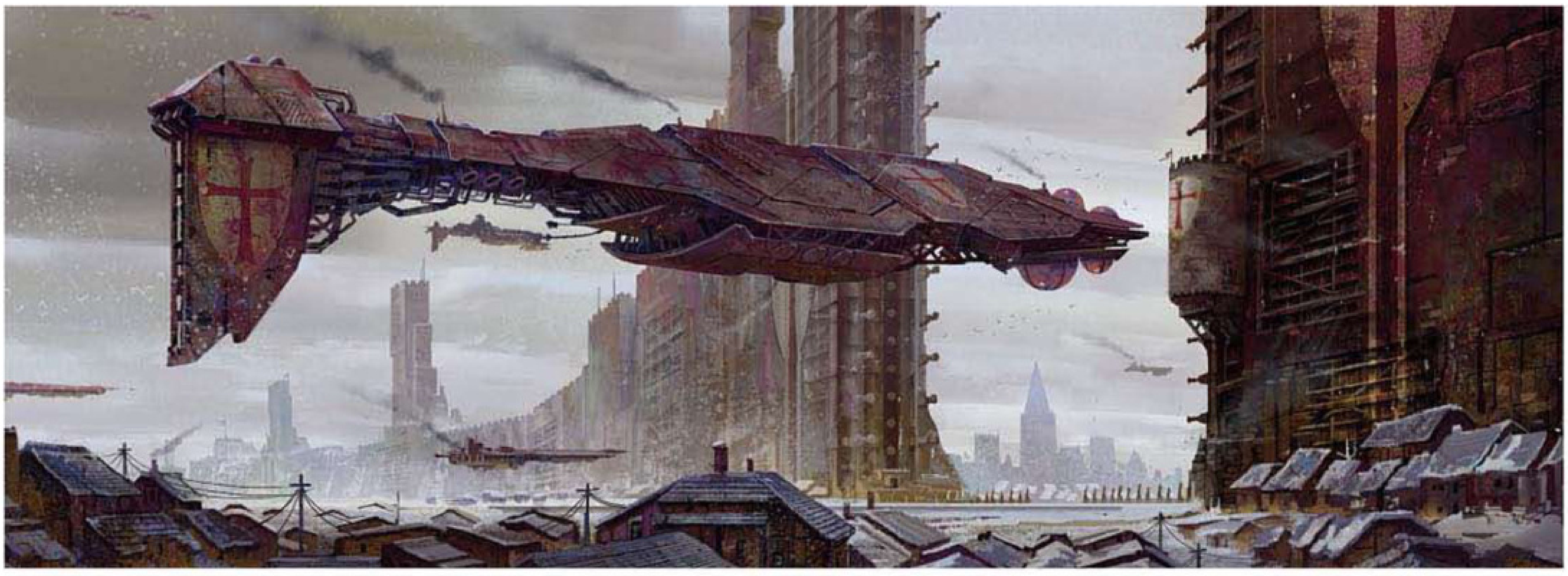
Starbreeze's home-grown engine is a powerful piece of tech, but it's squandered on the phoniest of video game spaces. There's a rifle range just off the lobby of a major tech company, there's a subway platform barely 30 feet long and littered with cover just in case a gun fight breaks out. It makes no sense.



Unlike Mass Effect 3's worlds, Syndicate's design pulls you from the experience, and gameplay feels flat and dated. These aren't rooms and corridors in places people live and work; these are three-dimensional boxes built to fight in. It's a sci-fi city that, in the wake of Human Revolution's rich and original world, just feels false.



LOCATION Berlin, Germany **RECENT PROJECT** Unannounced video game **WEB** www.sixmorevodka.com



A setting and spaceship from Hood. Whenever there's free time in the studio, artists turn their attention to SIXMOREVODKA's own IP project.

SIXMOREVODKA

CHARACTER BUILDING This young studio is making its mark with a colourful, high-impact style and a preference for artists with personality



Another character concept from Hood, which mixes contemporary and medieval weaponry, technology and themes.

When a studio goes by the name SIXMOREVODKA (SMV), you can tell there's a good deal of spirit behind it. Although quality is at the core of everything it produces, the Berlin-based studio isn't adverse to having a little fun. In fact, personality is a key ingredient founder Marko Djurdjevic looks for in young artists.



"The personal aspect is very important," he says. "You want to work with people who understand each other, who have fun together, who make friendships and are able to ease the stress and pressure we face. That's why it's really important for any future artist to be able to click with us, to embellish our team not only with their art, but with personality as well."

Creative skills, communication and a knowledge of the world, history and pop culture are important too, along with the ability to do things differently. Fresh ideas and the willingness to try out new approaches are things that excite Marko when he checks out a new artist's portfolio. That's what makes an artist stand out from the crowd.

For their Facebook fans, Capcom commissioned SIXMOREVODKA to create illustrations from some of the most iconic enemies in the film/game series, including this undead Dobermann.

Since setting up 18 months ago in a Berlin gallery space, SMV has grown to a team of nine and it's still expanding. The company already has over 40 clients and has worked on video games, comics, movies and music videos. The colourful, high-impact style of the studio's work is driven by Marko. As he oversees projects, he relies on his past experience with Massive Black, and as a freelancer, to ensure quality.





ARTIST INTERVIEW

VILLE-VALTTERI KINNUNEN

We find out what it's like to work at SMV





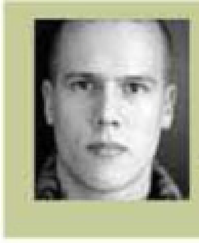
PROJECTS Thor, Avengers Origins, game concept work for Guerilla, Visceral, Avalanche

What do you find exciting about working for big clients in comics, gaming and film?
It's great to be working with so many awesome clients and projects at the same time. With every new assignment I always want to do my best work, but at the same time I also have to adapt to a new style and direction. It's very exciting to be in that spot. You'll learn so much and it's fulfilling to see yourself pull off something you've never done before.

What's the atmosphere like in the studio?
Because the atmosphere here is so friendly and relaxed it's easy to forget how incredibly talented the people I'm working with are. But every time I walk over to someone's desk I'm blown away by the quality of their work. For a tiniest moment it makes me want to give up painting altogether, but then I rush back to my desk, scrap whatever sketch I had going on and push myself to do better.

What are the biggest challenges you face as a concept artist?
If you really think you have something good on your hands you should be prepared to go the extra mile to push it in the concept. But sometimes not even an inspired night shift is enough to convince the client to pick that design, and then you just have to swallow it.

What advice would you give to fellow artists wanting to break into concept art?
Looking at other people's artwork is always great, but it shouldn't be your main source for inspiration. For a concept artist it's important to go back to the root of things. There is always a purpose to the shape of a weapon, or say how fabric is cut and treated. When you research these things, even superficially, it helps you to make designs that are successful.



Ville is a senior concept artist. He's previously worked for BioWare, Funcom and was art director on Age of Conan.

http://villek.cgsociety.org



A character concept from SIXMOREVODKA's own creation, Hood, which they're developing themselves whenever there's time.



Concepts and final executions for environments, vehicles and characters are all part of the SIXMOREVODKA repertoire.

"I assign the work to each individual artist in the process, and I have complete trust in their skills and competence as true professionals," he explains. "Having said that, it was always my intention when starting SMV to remain heavily involved in each step of the production process. I think that's the only way to maintain the continuous level of quality that I'm pleased to say we are known for."

Prior to setting up SMV, Marko was a successful cover artist and illustrator. His new studio enables him to get involved with a wide range of bigger projects. The secret is to keep the team organised, stay on top of the workflow and to meet deadlines, which gives clients the confidence to come back. Teamwork is important to the SMV working model. Marko and his artists share the workload – ensuring that no individual creative is under too much pressure.

Nothing can quite prepare you for the move from being a freelance artist working on smaller scale projects to running a studio, according to Marko. You need to be able to learn about the various aspects of business including admin, scheduling, business development, dealing with lawyers, tax accountants and so forth. "Basically, all of the things no sane person would love to do," he says. Another key aspect is leading and inspiring the art team, and being a good boss.

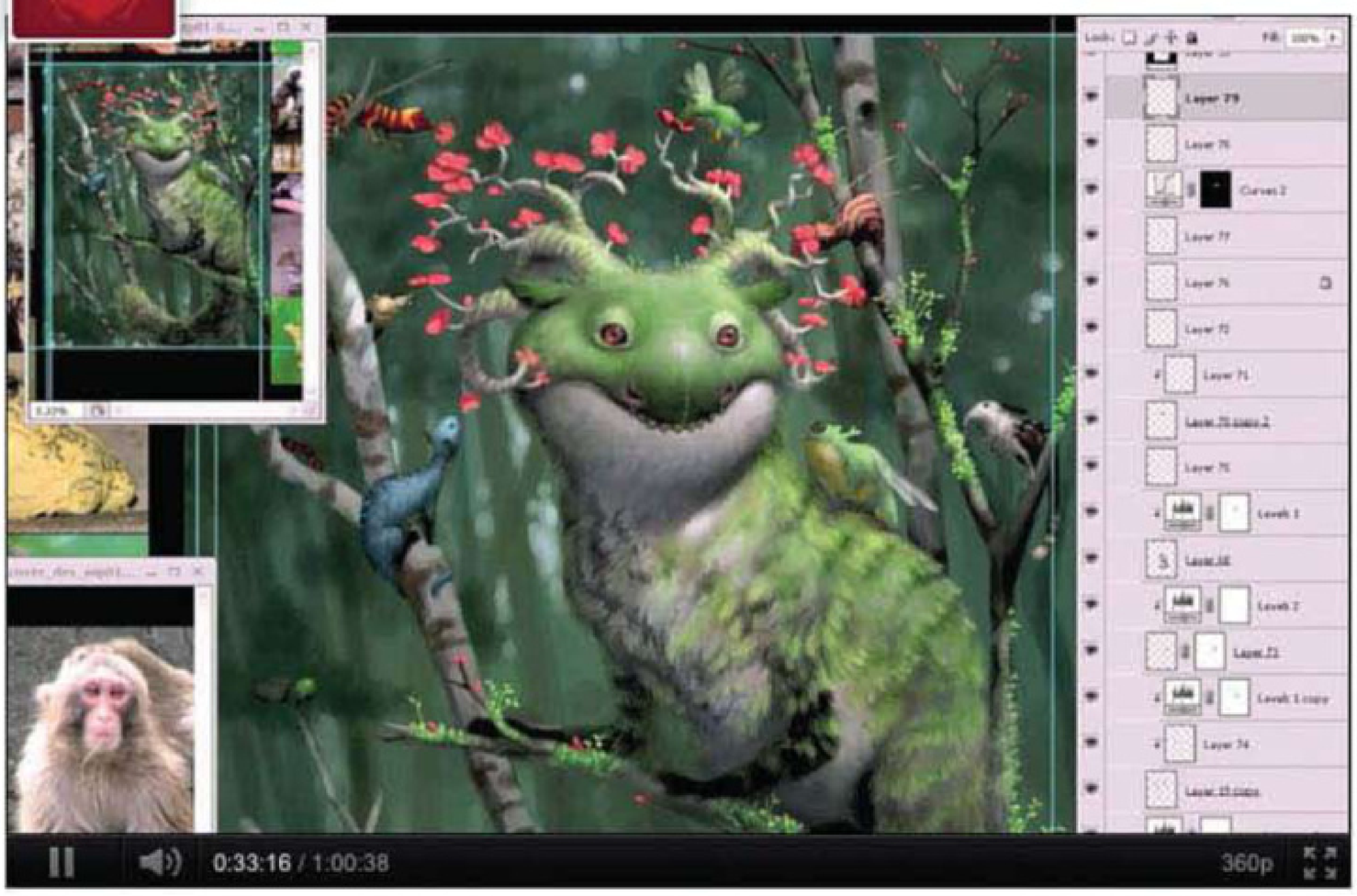
> **"It's important for any future artist to embellish our team not only with their art, but with personality too"**

Going forward, SMV will be keeping the focus on quality and continuing to bring in big name clients, but they're also working on their own project: Hood. Watch for it – more details will be released in due course.

WATCH AND LEARN

ImagineFX YouTube

Just a few of the brilliant artist videos that you can find on our YouTube channel...



Concept a fantasy creature

Talented creature designer Bobby Chiu uses real-life animal references to paint a crafty woodland beast. You can see the video at **www.bit.ly/chiucreature**.



Dream setting

Watch Min Yum create a poignant fantasy scene at **www.bit.ly/minyumdream**.



ArtRage 3 guide

Nick Harris explores ArtRage 3 while painting a giant at **www.bit.ly/harrisgiant**.



Vehicle design

Dr CM Wong passes on his spaceship design advice at **www.bit.ly/wongship**.

Manga advice

Genzoman paints brightly coloured manga art at **www.bit.ly/genzomanmanga**.



Underwater art

Go to **www.bit.ly/delonmermaid** to see Mélanie Delon portray a lush mermaid.

Go to www.youtube.com/imaginefx now!

- Get countless hours of free video tuition from the world's leading artists.
- Discover how your favourite painters create their eye-popping imagery.
- Watch the videos on your desktop, laptop, iPad, Android or iPhone.
- New videos appear regularly, so be sure to subscribe to our channel.

VISIT WWW.YOUTUBE.COM/IMAGINEFX

FANTASY & SCI-FI DIGITAL ART
ImagineFX

Logged in as You
Your homepage
Inbox
Log out

Reader FXPosé
UPLOAD YOUR DIGITAL ART HERE

HOME | GALLERIES | FORUMS | BLOGS | WORKSHOPS | INTERVIEWS | REVIEWS | DOWNLOADS | DIRECTORY | SHOP

SEARCH

Look out for this upload button on the homepage



© Artwork clockwise, from top left: Elizabeth Le, LJ Bamforth, Sacha Angel Diener and Stephane Paitreau.

Upload your portfolio today for free and share your artwork with thousands of professional and amateur artists…

www.imaginefx.com

GALLERIES | FORUMS | BLOGS | WORKSHOPS | INTERVIEWS | REVIEWS | DOWNLOADS

THE **Digital Animation & Visual Effects** SCHOOL

WWW.DAVESCHOOL.COM



Owen Cartagena: Student At DAVE

Prior Training: None

Time In School: 2 Weeks

Modleing Time: 4 days